Christian Courier

52nd Year of Publication

November 15, 1996/No. 2508

REDEEMER COLLEGE LIBRARY
~~ROUTE~~
CHRISTIAN COURIER
PER/BX/9401/.C36
NOV 18 1996

Canadians and Americans divided on issues affecting church and society

BERT WITVOET

In Canada, most people don't get their nourishment from the church.

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO; ANCASTER, Ont. — Canadians and Americans have sharply different views on God, the church, and national priorities, according to a survey recently conducted by the Toronto-based Angus Reid Group.

"I was surprised by the differences in national mood and national priorities," says Andrew Grenville, who directed the survey. He noticed "stark differences" in priorities, with Canadians focusing on jobs and Americans showing more concern for family values and moral standards.

"Another interesting twist is that we see such a strong linkage between religion and politics in the U.S.," says Grenville. In his opinion, this is "due to culture, not religiosity." One reflection of this is that 72 per cent of Canadians surveyed would vote for a party led by an atheist, but only 43 per cent of Americans would do so. Although the same number of Americans and Canadians were surveyed (about 3000 each), and the U.S has 10 times the population of Canada. Grenville says the results are accurate for both countries because they were statistically weighted.

Asked whether they believe in God, about 90 per cent of Canadians said yes, compared with 95 per cent 40 years ago. This compares to 95 per cent of Americans surveyed, the same as 40 years ago. But there was a bigger contrast between the number of Canadians and Americans who attend church or synagogue each week. About 40 per cent of Americans surveyed said yes to this, compared with the same number 40 years ago. But only about a third of Canadians said yes, compared with more than 60 per cent 40 years ago.

Different perceptions of the church

These differences between Canadians and Americans have much to do with recent history and the different identity of the church in each country, says David Koyzis, a professor of political science at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont. and a regular columnist for CC.

"The dominant churches in the countries tend to be quite different," he says. Historically, Canada had more ties between the church and government, especially in Quebec, where "the Roman Catholic church so dominated society."

See **SURVEY** *page 3...*

Pacific salmon spawning grounds increasingly a battleground

Jeff Hoogendoorn

VICTORIA, B.C. — The yearly, ritual migration has once again begun. From October through December, millions of salmon return to the pebbly riverbeds where they hatched, leaving behind them the great expanse of the Pacific Ocean which had been their source of nourishment.

The scene is played out in the countless rivers and streams in the Pacific Northwest from Alaska's fjords south along the green-ribbon shores of British Columbia to the United States.

The salmon return to the mouth of the stream of their lineage and gather in the salty waters as if waiting for a divine word to head upstream. Once in the fresh water they fight their way against the power of the stream, sometimes succumbing to its force before reaching their destination: the spawning bed.

The males fight for the right to spawn with the females who deposit up to 3,000 eggs in the pebbles on the bottom of the stream. Exhausted from fighting, protecting their redds (nests), and lack of food — their last meal was in the Pacific Ocean — the salmon die and become a part of the food chain as fodder for gulls, raccoons and other scavengers.

It's both a fearful and an awesome sight: thousands of dead fish plugging a stream. Yet from this apparent devastation, seeds of life are waiting to burst from the bottom. But this watery pilgrimage is not always a successful return to salmon mecca.

Decimation of fish stocks

The true carnage has occurred over the past generation in which over-fishing has been a major factor in the decimation of fish stocks. Furthermore, fish habitats have felt the effects of logging, which has caused silt to plug and choke waterways. Environmental damage such as stream diversion and the heavy use of fertilizers and pesticides weigh heavily in the reasons for salmon depletion.

In 1977, the Goldstream River in Goldstream Provincial Park, B.C., saw only about 12,000 chum salmon make the return to the river to spawn. This was down considerably from the original capabilities of the river which Darcy Sampson estimates to have been 100,000-125,000 salmon.

Sampson, a member of the

See **NATIVE** *page 2...*

In this Issue

The day God got lost in Paris ..... p. 10
Listening to the voiceless ..... p. 11
Running the technological race ..... p. 13

REDEEMER COLLEGE LIBRARY
777 HWY #53 EAST
ANCASTER, ON
L9K 1J4
Dec 96

News

Response to survey from south of the border

Alan Doerksen

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.; WASHINGTON, D.C. — One key difference between Canadians and Americans is that "in the U.S., religion does not only suggest church life," says James Skillen, executive director of the Center for Public Justice in Washington, D.C.

In America, religion is much more noticeable on radio and television and in other areas of life, but Can-adians seem to connect religion more with church-going, says Skillen, commenting on the Angus Reid survey on God and Society in North America.

Skillen is surprised at the high numbers of people who agreed that Christ is the Son of God and can forgive sins. But he's not surprised at the high percentage of those who say all religions are true — there is an increasing movement toward relativism in North America.

Skillen notes that more American than Canadian Christians view political involvement as important. "I think that idea of Christian involvement is connected with [American] organizations like the Christian Coalition and the Moral Majority."

When voting for a political leader, fewer Americans would vote for an atheist because Americans are more concerned about the character of their leaders, Skillen observes. "We elect individuals based on what they do or say," whereas Canadians vote for a party more than for its leader.

In terms of national priorities, "everyone speaks of family values" in the U.S., notes Skillen. Americans have no unity issue to deal with and the economy is not as big an issue as in Canada because "we've got relatively low unemployment. The economy is in good health."

Different religious legacies

Dr. Corwin Smidt, a professor of political science at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., was a consultant to Angus Reid for the survey and helped to develop its questions. According to Smidt, the difference shown between Canadian and Americans on religious issues shows "there has been in American culture a greater legacy of respect for religion." One major difference between the countries is that the U.S. mainline churches tend to be more ecumenical than in Canada, but several Canadian mainline churches had "more of a formal merger in the United Church."

Smidt agrees with Koyzis that American churches are more democratic and independent than Canadian mainline churches.

Smidt commented on the results that showed most Canadians and Americans believe Christ is the Son of God but also believe all great religions are true: "Understanding the historical interpretation of who Jesus Christ was, to then turn around and say all religions are true [is] an indictment of both cultures."

Smidt notes that many more Americans (55 per cent) than Canadians (28 per cent) say the Bible is God's Word, literally word for word. "Americans have historically held elevated views of the Bible," he says. "The Bible's still venerated in American society."

When asked who they considered their country's most important Christian leader, most Canadians surveyed answered "no one/don't know," and the highest support for an individual was the Pope, at only six per cent. In contrast, 25 per cent of Americans listed Billy Graham as an important leader, and 12 per cent listed the Pope.

According to Smidt, this shows that "there has been more of a recognized leader in the evangelical world in the U.S. than in Canada. Once Billy Graham's gone from the scene, we'll be more like Canadians."

Smidt admits that Americans seem to be more concerned about moral and family issues, but notes that Canadian concerns about jobs and the economy can also be connected with a concern for their families. He finds it ironic that both Bob Dole and Bill Clinton focused largely on economic issues in their recent campaigns, considering the concerns Americans expressed in the survey.

The survey was sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts, a large, Philadelphia-based charity run by the Pew family, who are connected with the Sun Oil Company.

Native group works to preserve Pacific salmon

... continued from page 1

Tsartlip band, is a founder of the Saanich Tribal Fisheries established in 1977 to combat the decreasing numbers of fish returning to their traditional fishing grounds. He attributes the reduction of fish stocks in the Goldstream River mostly to paving over stream estuaries to make room for highways and parking lots to accomodate park visitors. The goal of the Tribal Fisheries is to improve the fish habitat and to provide enough fish for the various Native bands in the area.

Fish returning to the spawning beds in Goldstream have been on the increase since 1977. This has been accomplished through fishing restrictions and careful monitoring.

Habitat has been brought back to a more natural state largely through the efforts of those in the Tribal Fisheries. These efforts include stream enhancement: clearing out the estuaries of log jams and (re)introducing boulders and pebbles to the stream beds to provide a nursery for the young fry.

The returning salmon now number approximately 30,000, a figure Sampson agrees is the present capacity of the river.

A federal/provincial hatchery at the north end of the river has also helped secure fish stock numbers. Another program had school children rear chum in the classroom and then release the fry when they were ready to journey to the ocean.

Hostility between interested parties

The Saanich Tribal Fisheries decides how much fish they will allow to be taken from the bays, making sure enough salmon reach their spawning grounds. Seeing the Native fishery during times of dwindled stocks upset many people, including commercial fishers who claim that this contributes to stock depletion rather than replenishing.

Says Carol Berryman, senior naturalist at Goldstream Provincial Park, "Because of decimation on other rivers and the fishery in general, people become more hostile when they see Natives fishing.... But [the Natives] are very ethical about it" (referring to the stream enhancement projects).

Sampson defends his peoples' right to fish when others [whites] cannot. And he does not agree with the term "food" fishery which would mean that Natives can fish only for food, for there are times when the salmon are sold: "We're trading off for things we need. This is historically true with trading with the Hudson's Bay Company."

Berryman does not see a problem with the Native fishery and notes that the Natives generally fish for chum salmon "which is not an endangered species to the extent of the other Pacific salmon species."

"What's more," she says "Natives taught Europeans how and where to fish. Europeans then over-fished and then tried to ban Natives from fishing."

Much of the work done by the Saanich Tribal Council in the streams and in the bays benefits the fishery as a whole, and much of the money made in the sale of fish from the Native fishery goes to support the stream enhancement programs.

Sampson says the Saanich Tribal Council tries to work in co-operation with the federal and provincial programs, although this does not preclude disagreements. And he agrees that people often have the negative perception that Natives want everything their way.

But Sampson counters: "Just because I'm a Native doesn't mean I will disagree with everything. I'm a hunter and a fisherman. I'm concerned. We're all guests here in this land. It's the animals that rule the land."

COURTESY JEFF HOOGENDOORN

Dominican Republic

The Bible League presents
A MISSION TOUR
The Dominican Republic:
January 20 - 27, 1997

Cost: $939.00 p.p., ex. Tor., Dbl. occ.,
Plus Dep. Tax — 50 Plus Discount

VISIT — with your Missionaries - Mission Projects
SEE — Bible Distribution
ENJOY — Christian Fellowship

Second Week Stay Optional — Upon Request
Personally escorted by Rev. John G. Klomps
Executive Director, TBL
For complete information and reservations, please call or write:
The Bible League, P.O. Box 5037, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8
Telephone: (905) 319-9500 or 1-800-363-WORD

Survey shows more Canadians have given up on church

... continued from page 1

The mainline churches in Canada have "more of an emphasis on hierarchy," but mainline American churches (such as Baptists) are more focused on voluntarism, he notes.

Canada more secularized

In the last 40 years, Canada has become more secularized than the U.S., partly because of the secularizing influence of Europe, says Koyzis. In Canada, "most people are not willing to give up on God [but] they've given up on the church." Still, most Canadians won't go all the way to "full-blown atheism," he says.

"Up to 25 years ago, Canada was more of a church-going country than the U.S. Something happened in that time to turn Canadians away from churches." Koyzis would like to know the reasons for this but says that the survey does not answer that question and "only scratched the surface."

The survey showed that the Atlantic and Prairie provinces have the highest percentage of weekly churchgoers, while Quebec has the lowest percentage. "In Quebec, a lot has to do with the Quiet Revolution 30 years ago," Koyzis comments. Before that time, the Roman Catholic Church was more prominent in Quebec life.

Fewer Americans have given up on the church, Koyzis says. This is because the Americans have a less formal view of the church than Canadians do. "The paradox is that a less serious view of the church has helped Americans confront secularism by maintaining a form of Christianity that is individualistic."

Contradictory claims

A surprisingly high number of both Canadians and Americans surveyed agreed that Christ is the Son of God. About 81 per cent of Americans and 71 per cent of Canadians believe this basic Christian truth. When asked if the life, death and resurrection of Christ provided forgiveness for their sins, 63 per cent of Canadians and 84 per cent of Americans agreed. But, ironically, two-thirds of Canadians and half of Americans surveyed agreed that all great religions are equally true and good. "People who say that are trying to appear tolerant," comments Koyzis. But he adds that it is a mistaken view because "the world religions make contradictory claims."

Christianity and politics are more closely linked in the U.S. than in Canada, asserts Koyzis. Religion is "not really an issue" in Canada, and Christian political rhetoric is "not part of the several political cultures of Canada." But Christianity is more of an open issue for Americans, says Koyzis. "You have more people willing to call themselves Christians in the States."

Different priorities

Canadians and Americans showed a marked difference in what they considered the most important issues that should be addressed by their respective leaders. For Canadians, the top five issues were: jobs, unity/Quebec, the economy, the deficit, and healthcare. But Americans listed defense/peace first, education and crime/violence tied for second spot; the economy, deficit/debt and drugs tied as the next concerns. In terms of national priorities, Canadians listed building the economy, promoting families, and maintaining law and order as their top priorities, but Americans listed promoting the family, raising moral standards and maintaining law and order. Koyzis observes, "Canadians are more likely to vote on things to do with economics. Issues like the family don't seem to be so important to Canadians." But the U.S. has "a lot worse social problems than Canada does," and this is reflected in the results.

David T. Koyzis

Why Americans don't vote

By the time this column appears in print, the American presidential election will have come and gone. It is always hazardous to make predictions as to the outcome, although as I write, public opinion polls have given Bill Clinton a decisive lead over his opponent, Bob Dole. Nevertheless, in 1948 the *Chicago Tribune* was rather too hasty in posting as its headline "Dewey defeats Truman" when, in fact, Harry Truman had secured for himself another four years in the White House against his Republican rival, Thomas Dewey.

What seems safe to predict however, is that once again Americans will stay home from the polls in droves. In 1960 some 65 per cent of Americans cast ballots. After that year voter turnout steadily declined until 1988, when only 53 per cent of Americans voted. In 1992 voter turnout increased unexpectedly to 56 per cent, yet the basic pattern seems not to have changed markedly. By contrast, some 75 per cent of Canadians vote in federal elections, and 83 per cent of Dutch citizens vote in their elections.

Seeming contradiction

Observers have long puzzled over why Americans, who are so famously attached to the principles of democracy, do not vote in very large numbers. Explanations have ranged from the requirements in most states of advance registration to vote and the enfranchisement during the 1960s and '70s of minorities and young people (who generally tend to vote less than their fellow citizens), to the sheer complexity of the voting process, in which Americans must educate themselves concerning scores of candidates running for public office.

All of these are plausible reasons for the low turnout of American voters. However, much of the explanation, I am inclined to think, is to be found in the fact that American election campaigns are so heavily oriented towards the images and personalities of the candidates themselves rather than towards the parties and concrete public policy issues. Candidates for office generally go to great lengths to avoid openly addressing issues, especially divisive ones, such as abortion and homosexual rights.

If they do pronounce on matters of public policy, they will generally do so in such a way as to attract the most potential voters and to alienate as few others as possible. This often leads to some eclectic proposals that promise simultaneously to lower taxes, to preserve current levels of public services and to eliminate the deficit. That such policies are impossible to bring about except in the pages of a science-fiction novel seems not to have occurred either to the politicians promising them or to the voters who would like to believe them.

Reforms needed, but not likely

In fact, of course, many voters are simply disillusioned with the options placed before them. The Republican and Democratic parties are extremely weak by Canadian and European standards, and because they are so much the creatures of their candidates, they are unable to formulate coherent public policy alternatives that would bind these candidates once they had attained their respective posts. In the absence of effective party identity and discipline, the President and members of Congress are unable to co-operate with each other to draft consistent policies.

A number of reforms could help to remedy this general disaffection among Americans, including the adoption of proportional representation for the House of Representatives, the establishment of new parties able to challenge the Democrats' and Republicans' monopoly, the strengthening of new and existing parties, and the lengthening of the terms of Representatives from two to four years. Failing such basic reforms, many Americans will probably continue to decide that voting isn't worth their trouble.

David T. Koyzis grew up in the U.S., is now a Canadian citizen, and teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

van der Woerd
LAW OFFICE
David A. van der Woerd B.A., LL.B.
20 Jackson Street West, Suite 512, Hamilton, Ontario L8P 1L2
Tel. (905) 577-6205 Fax (905) 577-9498

Rates to December 31, 1996
RRSP Appr. 5.6%
Regular Fund 5.25%
Your funds will be invested in Christian Reformed Church and Christian School building projects in Canada.
CRC EXTENSION FUND
Call: (416) 461-1207 evenings or write:
Christian Reformed Extension Fund
45 Harriet St., Toronto, ON M4L 2G1

Editorials

Are we becoming postmodern people?

According to University of Toronto professor Neil Nevitte, a substantial value change has taken place in Canada and in all other industrial states over a 15-year period. He was interviewed by the *Globe and Mail* about his book *The Decline of Deference*.

One of the changes Nevitte talks about is that today's people are less interested in the accumulation of material goods and more interested in self-actualization. They are less concerned with traditional notions of authority in polity, the work place and the family and more concerned with authority residing within the self.

The meanings of left and right politics have changed as well. The new left is about the environment, about tolerance for alternative lifestyles. Concepts of good and evil are anchored in public concerns over the environment, the importance of friendship, good health, use of the imagination, tolerance and support for the women's movement.

Nevitte pictures clusters of values that belong to certain mindsets. If you are in the traditional authority group, you respect parents, good and evil are clear to you, you respect authority, you want many children, work is important, so is family, God and religion, and you nurture national pride.

If you find yourself in the postmodern group, you trust people, divorce is okay, friends are important, homosexuality is okay, as is abortion, good health is important, freedom equals equality, the imagination is cultivated, leisure is important, so is ecology, free choice, independence, life satisfaction and the women's movement.

Creatures of "our" time

As I look at these groupings, I find myself mostly in the traditional authority camp but also at times in the postmodern camp. Perhaps you do too. Family is important to me, but so are friends. Respect for authority should be nurtured, I say, but so should the imagination. Work is important to me, but so is good health. We should have a clear sense of good and evil, though there are complexities and grey areas, but the environment must be protected and cared for.

But I do not accept the overall package of the postmodern mindset: the belief in self-rule, the belief that abortion, divorce and homosexuality are okay, the over emphasis on leisure and equality, and, of course, the assumption that God is not important.

Which leads to the question of who we Christians really are in this postmodern age?

We are all creatures of "our" time. "Our" time may be the time of the '40s or' 50s, or it may be the '80s and '90s. Some of us got stuck in the past. Others allow for modification as the decades march along. But for the Christian there should be essential components that remain. We should certainly guard against simply following along either the traditional or the postmodern pathway.

In all times we should be counter-main-culture if for the simple reason that the teachings of Christ have never been main stream. Christ did not say it, but he could have: Be *in* but not *of* your culture. **BW**

Christian Courier

Formerly known as Calvinist Contact
Founded in 1945

An independent weekly that seeks the truth, care and rule of Jesus Christ as it:
— reports on significant happenings in the Christian community and the world;
— expresses opinions that are infused by Scripture and Spirit and rooted in a Reformed perspective;
— provides opportunities for contact and discussion for the Christian community.

Editor: Bert Witvoet **General Manager:** Stan de Jong
Associate Editor: Marian Van Til
Staff Reporter: Alan Doerksen
Regional Reporters:
Jeff Hoogendoorn, Victoria, B.C.; James Kwantes, Vancouver, B.C.; Cindy Bruin, Calgary, Alta.; Gordon Legge, Calgary, Alta.; Jane Ouwehand, Agassiz, B.C.; Jessie Schut, Edmonton, Alta.; Anne Van Arragon Hutten, Kentville, N.S.; Robert VanderVennen, Toronto, Ont.
Circulation Manager: Grace Bowman;
Advertising and Typesetting: Ingrid Torn;
Layout & Design: Alan Doerksen, Ingrid Torn
Proofreading: Grace Bowman

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD
Robert Bernhardt, Harry der Nederlanden
Margaret Griffioen-Drenth, Anne Van Arragon Hutten,
Doug Roorda, Wendy Saunders,
Erick Schuringa, William Van Huizen,
Nelly Westerhoff.

The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by either *Christian Courier* or the publisher:

Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited
4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON
L2W 1A1, Canada
Tel: (905) 682-8311; fax: (905) 682-8313

And a good time was had by CRC people!

Love is an action word, sang Darlene Koldenhoven, and video pictures of people acting out love in prison ministry, refugee work and handicapped ministry confirmed it.

I and several hundreds of fellow CRCers attended a "Free to Serve" multi-media rally at Redeemer College in Ancaster on November 2. We submitted ourselves to the $600,000 denominational extravaganza that is meant to raise awareness of the church's ministry and make people think positively about the Christian Reformed Church. Judging from comments floating through the hallways after the performance, a lot of us were inspired and moved by the invitation to serve freely.

Some of the highlights were: 70 children singing "This Little Light of Mine"; a group of Kuranko singers and drummers demonstrating their love for Jesus in song and rhythm; an adult CRC choir lubricating their somewhat stiff bodies as they consciously moved to the rhythm; "entertainment missionary" Koldenhoven belting out "Praise to the Lord"; and a group of four young players acting and interacting around stories of faith.

If the celebrative show made people more aware of the heart of the church's mandate it was worth all the money and time expended. If it made people realize that the criteria used by the Son of Man on the Day of Judgment for separating the sheep and the goats is not "What was your position on a given topic?" but "Did you feed me when I was hungry, did you look after me when I was sick, did you visit me in prison?" then "Free to Serve" did its job well. From an issue-oriented person's point of view, presenting service models is terribly superficial, but from a suffering-world standpoint, it represents salvation.

According to Peter Borgdorff, executive director of CRC ministries, the enthusiastic reception in various centres throughout Canada and the United States showed that the program filled a need.

It is probably also true that many people want to have their church services loosen up a bit. We as Westerners of Dutch descent may not be able to emulate Sierra Leonians in their freedom of movement and expression, but we do want to externalize better the joy we feel about God's love for us.

"Who is the church?" one videotaped person asked. "We are the church," he answered. How true! And we as church may serve *and* celebrate God's invitation to love. During the last decade, the Christian Reformed Church has gone through a lot of negative criticism and infighting. In the meantime, there were hundreds and thousands of believers doing their thing: loving God with all their heart, soul and mind, and their neighbor as themselves — walking the extra mile, turning the other cheek, giving their second coat.

Without becoming smug, we may say, Thank God for the Christian Reformed Church and its many arms of ministry. "Free to Serve" allowed us to say that more convincingly. **BW**

More than one hundred years of fruitbearing

It was a pleasure to read Robert Vander Vennen's report on the Coptic Evangelistic Church of Egypt. It is good to hear what the Lord is doing there.

A few corrections must be made for accuracy's sake. The beginnings of the Coptic Evangelical Church may be traced to the decision of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church's Synod of the West to open a mission field in Egypt in 1853.

This work was carried on by the denomination which succeeded the ARPC, namely, the United Presbyterian Church of North America, formed in 1858. The *Ibis* was purchased in 1860 for evangelistic work along the Nile.

Literacy was a concern from the beginning of the work. Schools were established in various places, beginning in 1855. Assuit College provided training for the ministers of the Coptic Evangelical Church, and the Girls' College of Cairo was the only school of its kind in North America for many years.

A dowry for missions

Yes, Robert, there really was a maharajah! His name was Dhuleep Singh, and he came from the Punjab. While at school in England he embraced the Christian faith. On a visit to Cairo in 1864 he sought the help of United Presbyterian missionaries in finding a suitable Christian wife. A bride was found, and in gratitude the maharajah presented the mission with $5000 (U.S.) in gold, and the same sum annually for 12 years thereafter.

The United Presbyterian mission to Egypt succeeded in maintaining a balanced program of evangelism, education and medical work. The training of indigenous leadership was a concern from the early years of the work. As Wallace Jamison relates, the converts were influenced by the evangelistic spirit of the missionaries and became evangelists themselves. One of the factors which strengthened the church in the face of persecution was the "deep reverence for the Bible" imparted to these converts.

More than 100 years later we hear that this mission is still bearing fruit today! The story of United Presbyterian missions is told in Wallace Jamison's book, *The United Presbyterian Story.* Sadly, the United Presbyterians have all but vanished from the ecclesiastical landscape of North America. They deserve to be remembered.

(Rev.) Ray B. Lanning
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Prophetic consistency or priestly compassion?

Once upon a time I was the chairperson of the Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG) of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. I know from experience (especially during the October crisis) how difficult it can be to speak to the government for the Canadian section of the Christian Reformed Church.

Therefore I am so sorry that my friend Bernie De Jonge became so angry with the committee. True, they may have made a procedural mistake, for which Mr. Reinder Klein has already offered an apology. But a procedural mistake does *not* mean that the committee was erring in what it said. I submit that in the submission of the committee there was no conflict whatsoever with the 1973 synodical pastoral guidelines regarding homosexuality.

I wish that Rev. De Jonge and his council and the members of Classis Hamilton had read what I wrote in The Banner on September 30. Then they would not have acted the way they did now.

Let me repeat what I wrote:

Homosexual people are, after all, human beings, who need food, shelter and a measure of protection under the law. As Veenstra said correctly: "Justice is for all." You may disagree with the homosexual lifestyle, even try to change people who are such, but don't deny them their human rights. It might just break down any bridges you may have to your homosexual neighbors.

"Prophetic consistency" does not help our homosexual brothers and sisters; "priestly compassion" does. The report of 1973 showed this, saying "churches should recognize that their homosexual members are fellow-servants of Christ."

Why should we discriminate against people who are already victims of much discrimination? Classis Hamilton sadly confused the task of the church with that of the government.

Finally, Bernie De Jonge, if the CCG agrees with CPJ (Citizens for Public Justice) they could do worse.

Rem Kooistra
Waterloo, Ont.

Courts wiser than saints

In your editorial "Sometimes the saints forget to be saved," (*Christian Courier*, Oct. 18) you sum up, Corinthians 6:1-8 as stating, "...Disputes between Christians should not be settled before the ungodly." The reference is apparently to "a number of court cases and civil suits" that were launched in the Mount Hamilton Christian Reformed Church dispute.

Ironically, as early as February of 1993, Judge Crane, in his decision in one of these court proceedings, stated: "The court respectfully encourages the parties to resolve by agreement, costs and other outstanding issues in accordance with the scriptural injection of 1 Corinthians 6" (see decision of Judge Crane in Buma, et. al: Appellants and Sikkema, et. al; Respondents). Other courts have expressed similar sentiments.

It appears that sometimes the secular courts forget they are the ungodly.

Wietse G. Posthumus
Toronto, Ont.

And a good time was had by Darlene Koldenhoven

BERT WITVOET

"Entertainment missionary" Darlene Koldenhoven (right) performed at a "Free to Serve" rally at Redeemer College in Ancaster Ont. November 2.

Nice equilibrium

What a wonderful balance of the practical and spiritual you manage to maintain in Christian Courier! We look forward to each issue.

Hilda J. Born
Abbotsford, B.C.

Christian Courier

An independent weekly with a Reformed perspective.
Member of Canadian Church Press and Evangelical Press Association.
Canada mail: Publications Mail Registration No. 0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ont. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1.
U.S. mail: Christian Courier (USPS 518-090). Second-class postage paid at Lewiston, NY. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, Box 110, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Subscriptions: (effective Feb. 1, 1995)	**Canada** (GST incl.)	**U.S.A.** (GST free)
one year (44 issues)	$43.50	$35.00 U.S.
two years (88 issues)	$82.00	$66.00 U.S.
three years (132 issues)	$123.00	$99.00 U.S.
overseas one year	$135 airmail $85.00 surface mail	

Advertising deadlines: display advertising: Wednesday, 8:30 a.m.; classified advertising: Thursday, 8:30 a.m. All deadlines are for the following week's issue. See classified pages for more details.
(ISSN 1192-3415) Published weekly on Fridays except for March 1, April 12, May 31, June 21, July 26, Aug. 23, Oct. 4 and Dec. 27, by Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited.
All correspondence should be addressed to: 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1, Tel.: 905-682-8311 or fax: 905-682-8313
PRINTED IN CANADA
This tabloid contains recycled paper.

Environment

Are we earth's stewards?

John Wood

We, participants in the Global Stewardship Initiative, were eating our lunch on our patio in Gloucester, Mass. A salty marine smell, that I miss when I'm home in Edmonton, hung in the air. It was a delight looking out over the swell and the surging Atlantic Ocean on the rocky beach in front of us. A local trawler worked across the waves in front of us. I didn't see a net, and so suspect they were lobstering instead. There has been a good deal of shifting going on from one fishery to another, as the stocks have been over-exploited.

These practical activities made a sharp counterpoint to the academic debates we had around the table. How do we understand global stewardship? More importantly, how do we go from the academy to the public square? These questions aren't merely academic curiosities. What we think has an impact on peoples' lives. And moreover, our theories are published not just on paper, but in the landscape itself. The sea beneath those beautiful waves has been scoured nearly barren by the failed theory of maximum sustained yield. Somehow with all of our knowledge, all of our technology, we've missed the point. At bottom we haven't managed to care for the earth, nor for each other.

Stewards of nothing?

The notion of stewardship is not an empty category. It has a long history identified with fiscal responsibility. But people are filing it with very different meanings today. I prefer the broader sense of stewardship as encompassing all of creation, not just the portion we have converted into monetary instruments. Some argue that we should not use this metaphor for our relationship to the natural world, as Bert Hielema did last summer (CC, Aug. 30, 1996). Harvard paleontologist and well known writer, Steven J. Gould says that "we are stewards of nothing." Given the realities of "deep time" and the short duration of the human species on earth, a better metaphor, he claims, would be the golden rule. Interestingly, he opts for another biblical metaphor: "Do unto others..." as a substitute.

Harsher critics claim that all this stewardship talk simply reveals our destructive, chauvinistic attitudes. Even among those who agree that we are to be stewards there are different views about what this means.

The stewardship concept is rapidly becoming institutionalized. In a document called "Principles for Packaging Stewardship in Canada," Environment Canada spells it out. Oh, this isn't about packaging the concept of stewardship for its distribution to the citizens. No, it's a challenge to reduce waste! The Canadian government now has a "Code of Environmental Stewardship," which includes the laudable goal of reducing waste when shipping things.

Elsewhere, the World Wildlife Fund has set up a "Marine Stewardship Council" and in the U.S. a conference was held on "aquatic ecosystem stewardship."

But it's not just secular groups that invoke stewardship. Numerous religious groups have made statements on our relationship to, and responsibility for the earth ("An Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation," for example). The Seventh-day Adventist Church, meeting last month in San Jose, Costa Rica, released a statement which says in part: "It is the belief of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that humankind was created in the image of God, and is thus to represent God as his steward to manage the natural environment in a faithful and fruitful way. Nature is a gift from God." Is there actually a biblical mandate to steward the creation? If so, what can we extend that to include global stewardship?

The 'Global Stewardship Initiative'

Over the last two years academics from 27 institutions in the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities have been meeting to discuss issues of global stewardship. We want to be clear to ourselves and others about what we mean by global stewardship. In a brief statement (see elsewhere on this page) they lay out its essential features and call for all of us to consider our wide-ranging responsibilities. Stewardship is fundamentally about relationships: God to us, we to each other, and we to the land, water, soil and creatures.

Global stewardship emphasizes the dependence we have increasingly on each other and on natural systems around the world. But this isn't just a narrow concept of ecology or even of economics. We need a new view of ourselves and what it means to be a neighbor, a keeper of each other.

John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College, Edmonton.

Global Stewardship: The Christian Mandate

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

(Heb. 1:1-2)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created...; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.... He is the beginning and the first born from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.... This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

(Col. 1:15-20, 23)

Stewardship begins with the understanding that God in Jesus Christ has created and now sustains the world, and that humans, who were created in God's image, have been charged to serve and keep the creation. At the same time we are creatures, shaped by the same processes and embedded in the same system of physical, chemical, and biological interconnections which sustain other creatures. Although it is appropriate to use the creation to meet our needs, scripture teaches that the chief purpose of creation is to glorify God.

Stewardly care is therefore a trust from God. This care includes all creation and the human culture built from it. Stewardship especially implies promoting just relationships among humans, and between humans and the rest of creation. This concern for justice is crucial for the developing world, where unjust relationships often leave people without land, food or health.

A biblical ethic *for stewardship includes, among others, the following conserving elements:*

1) Sufficiency — we need to be grateful to God for earth's bounty and also be content with what he has provided.

2) Justice — we must ensure that all humankind — future as well as present — enjoy the gifts of creation and are not impoverished by unjust or unwise use of those gifts.

3) Fruitfulness — while using the fruit of creation, we should never destroy creation's ability to be replenished.

4) Restoration/Sabbath — we should provide for the restoration of the ecosystems we have used or misused.

There are many ways in which good stewardship has been practised around the world; human creativity often enhances the fruitfulness of the earth and eases human suffering. It is also evident, however, that we have not always been faithful to our stewardly calling. The creation has been degraded by our misuse of the environment and our failure to treat all people justly.

It is good news *for humans and all of creation that God in Christ continues to care for his creation and is reconciling all things to himself. The atoning work of Christ on the cross has opened the door to reconciliation with God, and we are privileged to be ministers of that reconciliation.*

Stewardly care, therefore, involves participating with Christ in sharing this good news and in bringing healing to both human and non-human creation, foreshadowing that future time when the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness, and all creation is whole.

Global stewardship today entails addressing the intricate relationship between environmental degradation, resource consumption, population growth and the means of production of goods and their use.

Because local or regional ecological activities, when multiplied, potentially impact the biosphere, most human activities relate to global stewardship.

Christians are glad to unite with all those who share a concern for creation in bringing stewardly care to human culture and the natural systems on which we depend. In particular, those people and institutions which are explicitly Christian have a special responsibility to promote learning, research and living — our spiritual service — that will lead to faithful stewardly care of the creation, as they honor God who has entrusted the gift of creation to humankind.

A statement adopted by the Global Stewardship Initiative, Oct. 19, 1996, Gloucester, Mass.

ARTS & MEDIA
Media News

Books by the Bakkers tell different stories

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (EP) — Almost a decade after their ministry crumbled under the weight of mounting scandals, Jim and Tammy Bakker are back in the public eye — this time with books. Both are telling their story, but each has a very different story to tell.

Tammy: Telling It My Way presents a picture of the televangelist couple as well-meaning servants whose primary fault was trusting others too much. In Tammy Faye's eyes, Jessica Hahn was a "professional" seductress, and Jerry Falwell a greedy double-crosser.

Extravagance wrong

Her ex-husband paints a less flattering portrait in the revealingly titled *I Was Wrong: The Untold Story of the Shocking Journey from PTL Power to Prison and Beyond.* Jim Bakker still denies that he defrauded PTL Ministry supporters in a time-share condo scheme, but fully accepts responsibility for his extravagent lifestyle.

"It was wrong as a minister of the gospel, I believe, to live that way," Bakker said in an interview with Barbara Walters for ABC's "20/20," taped at his small farmhouse in Hendersonville, N.C. "Back then, I felt it was fine and justifiable."

Tammy Faye Messner is not conciliatory. She promoted her book recently on "Larry King Live," but, unwittingly, she does not present a flattering picture of herself in the book. "She comes off as a vapid personality whose main concern is clothes, shopping and other material things," says one Christian critic. Messner, who divorced her husband while he was in prison to marry one of his closest friends, bitterly denounces Christian leaders for what she says was their failure to come to the aid of the Bakkers in their hour of need."

Bakker was convicted on federal fraud charges in connection with the sale of "lifetime partnerships" in his Heritage USA religious retreat centre. He resigned in 1987 in a sex and money scandal involving a sexual encounter with church secretary Jessica Hahn. Control of the ministry was turned over to evangelist Jerry Falwell, but the ministry eventually went out of existance. Bakker served about five years in prison, and was released in 1993.

Both Jim and Tammy have kind words for Billy Graham, whose integrity was a beacon during the dark days for television evangelism in the late 1980s. Graham called the couple during their crisis, and later visited Jim in prison. Bakker recalls, "I felt as though Jesus himself had come to visit me."

New online Christian news magazine highlights human side of current news

ELLICOTT CITY, Md. — What is probably the first online Christian magazine was launched here late last month by a new ecumenical communication ministry.

"'Leaps of Faith' Can Overcome the Headlines of Fear," is the cover story of the first issue of *Village Life* (http://www.villagelife.org). New cover stories will appear each week and focus on such controversial issues as assisted suicide, teen pregnancy, abortion and genetic engineering.

The online magazine's founders say it will not tell readers what to believe, but the staff is committed "to providing the human dimensions of major issues."

"Too often the media concentrates only on one perspective or view on controversial social issues. We read about the group that has made the loudest noise, or an expert who seems to have the most credibility," said Rev. Jim Skillington, a United Methodist minister and publisher of *Village Life*.

"Our goal is to provide a fair and balanced view of the issue and the Internet allows us to provide links to many different perspectives. If we have a bias in our news coverage, it will be in our attempt to report the human dimensions of major issues."

News with a view

In covering the "headlines of fear," *Village Life* includes an overview of an issue and five other articles exploring various dimensions of the issue. An annotated list of other Internet sites related to the issue is included, as well as links to other non-profits and faith communities working to combat fear.

"We will report the hard statistics," Skillington added, "but always try to answer: 'Where is the hope in this issue?'"

In addition to the social issues reported in weekly cover stories, *Village Life* includes many of the same kinds of articles and departments found in print news magazines. As it launches, the site will have nearly 75 different features or the equivalent of more than 200 printed pages.

Current news will be updated throughout the week in "Kaleidoscope Journal," a summary of the human side of the news. Another section of the site highlights religious travel and retreats in the U.S. and Canada.

Value-based reviews of current movies and recent videos are provided, as are reviews of contemporary music. A religion section includes features on holistic health, personal witness and little-known non-profit organizations actively involved in improving the lives of people.

Readers will be invited to express their opinions in a variety of online forums, and occasional live "village meetings" will allow readers to ask questions directly of the news-makers.

Linking Christians

Village Life is also bringing together in one place lists of events and workshops of interest to mainstream Christians including: continuing education and training opportunities for lay and clergy; and a schedule of satellite teleconferences planned by religious organizations.

Village Life is being created by Kaleidoscope Ministries Ltd., an ecumenical communication services non-profit. Its staff includes award-winning religious journalists and graphic designers.

Skillington, former director of communications for the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church, is the executive director of the ministry and publisher of the online magazine. He is thought to be the first ordained clergyperson to be appointed to a full-time Internet ministry by a mainstream denomination.

The homepage for *Village Life* depicts a diverse and intergenerational village with icons of buildings and people. By clicking on an icon, or object, different "departments" of the magazine are accessible.

In addition to publishing *Village Life*, Kaleidoscope Ministries Ltd. advises religious organizations on Internet strategies and is providing design services and project management for projects on the World Wide Web.

Power for the church

"Kaleidoscope Ministries, Ltd., has as its goal to explore the power and potential of the Internet and other contemporary media and to capture that power and potential for the church," said the Rev. James E. Townsend, associate general secretary of the board of higher education and ministry of The United Methodist Church.

Kaleidoscope Ministries Ltd., a non-profit Maryland corporation, has received start-up grants from Bauman Bible Telecasts of Washington, D.C. and Xenon Laboratories Inc. of Toronto, and donations from churches and individuals. The corporation has no direct connection with any denomination, except as a service provider.

For more information, the ministry can be reached toll-free at 1-888-203-9119.

Mortgage Investment Participation

Rates are coming down but we still pay
7.5% interest, 1-5 years
We offer you an opportunity to share in a quality FIRST MORTGAGE on PRIME PROPERTIES.

- Monthly interest cheques will be provided to you in advance.
- Participation of amounts $15,000 and up.
- Real Estate Appraisal available.

HARRY SNOEK LIMITED
32 Finch Avenue East
North York, ON M2N 4R1
(416) 221-7400

World's largest New Age festival is target of Christian outreach

SYDNEY, Australia (EP) — The Mind*Body*Spirit Festival held in Sydney, Australia, is billed by its organizers as "the largest and most highly attended event of its kind in the world." The festival, now held twice a year, attracts hundreds of exhibitors and over 60,000 visitors. Many of the visitors are seeking New Age teachings — but some of them will find Christianity instead, thanks to a Christian outreach aimed at New Age teachings.

"Australia is becoming very spiritual, but it is not embracing Christianity," said Philip Johnson, founder of the new Christian ministry New Age Mission. "If anyone thinks New Age is a passing fad, the evidence shows this is not so. The swing towards postmodern, New Age, neo-pagan and Buddhist style spiritualities in Australia is much stronger than overseas. Whether we like it or not, New Age is here to stay and the church cannot ignore what this all signifies.

Since 1991 Philip Johnson and the Rev. Ross Clifford, president of the New South Wales Council of Churches, have co-ordinated the Community of Hope booth at the festival. Earlier this year New Age Mission was established to help Christians reach New Agers with the Gospel nation wide. A recently released training video, "New Age Mission," has sold out across the country as has their book *Sacred Quest* (Albatross).

"Australians have never had a spirituality they could call their own, and the church has largely been on the fringe of society," Johnson explained. "I believe that this massive swing into New Age says a lot to the church about our togetherness and relevance.

He concluded, "There has been a vast spiritual vacuum here which the church has not effectively touched. The vacuum is now being filled up by New Age spirituality. The Body of Christ must address the issues raised by New Age and continue to pursue ministries which touch the whole person in their everyday affairs. We need the prayers and support of Christians to keep up our outreach."

Industrial leader: Church has good product but is not marketing it properly

BADEN, Germany (EP) — The church has a great product but it is not marketing it properly, according to Siegfried Buchholz, a leading European economist and industrialist.

Buchholz, the 66-year-old president of the Austrian Society for Chemical Economy, told the German news service IDEA, "Flocks of people are seeking meaning to and direction in their lives. The churches, however, offer next to nothing. If they conveyed the Gospel message credibly their future would look brighter."

Buchholz believes church leaders need to attend strategy seminars. "If my company lost so many customers or clients per year as the churches loses members, we would have one crisis meeting after the other," he says.

The main problem, says Buchholz, is that many church leaders do not seem to believe in what they preach. "If they don't believe in their product, they ought to look for another job, otherwise they'll cause their church considerable harm," he insists.

The Christian faith has a great deal to offer people in business, says Buchholz, but churches have failed to convince executives that the Bible has relevant answers to their problems. "Their doubts are not unfounded," Buchholz concludes. "Many Christians only answer questions no one has ever asked."

Reformed Church lets Rhem go

MUSKEGON, Mich. (EP) — Officials of the Reformed Church in America voted 27-23 to peacefully separate from Richard Rhem and his 2,800-member Christ Community Church in Spring Lake, Mich. Rhem disagrees with the denominational teaching that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. The denomination must still negotiate a financial settlement regarding the church's property, and determine what to do for roughly 100 members of the church who want to remain with the denomination.

Reformed ecumenical group won't reinstate South African church

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (REC) — South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) has not made enough effort to distance itself from apartheid, according to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC). WARC suspended the DRC's membership in 1982, when WARC declared that the theological support of apartheid was a heresy.

The WARC executive committee, meeting in Detmold, Germany, delayed a final decision on whether to lift the suspension of the DRC.

One of WARC's concerns is the unity process between the DRC and two of its daughter churches. WARC will send two delegations to South Africa to help the process.

A WARC monitoring group met in Johannesburg on August 8 to review the DRC case. They told the WARC executive the DRC proposes a model for unity that "still harbors the old divisions, but this time justified on the basis of cultural and language diversity."

No change

The group noted the DRC was also unwilling to accept the Belhar Confession, a confession held by one of the daughter churches, the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.

The monitoring group told the executive committee that the DRC wants to re-enter WARC "according to a process that is abstracted from the fundamental reason of their suspension, namely that the theological justification of apartheid constitutes a *status confessionis* [situation of confession]."

Texas driver convicted of manslaughter re: death of unborn baby

CORPUS CHRISTI, Tex. (EP) — A drunken driver was sentenced to 16 years in prison October 21 in the death of a baby who was delivered prematurely after a car accident. Frank Flores Cuellar, 50, had a blood-alcohol level twice the legal limit when he drove his truck into a car driven by Jeannie Coronado, who was seven-and-a-half months pregnant with Krystal. The child was delivered by emergency Caesarean section, and died within two days. Cuellar's attorney argued that his client should not have been prosecuted for manslaughter since the child had not been born at the time of the accident and was therefore not legally "alive." Pro-life activists hailed the decision as a step toward harsher sentencing for criminals who harm unborn children.

• CONTENT digital organs
• Pre-owned pianos
• Sheet music
• CDs & Tapes

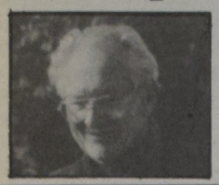
THE MUSIC GROUP
Willem Van Suydam
General Manager
5205 Harvester Rd., Unit 2
Burlington, ON L7L 6B5

1-800-376-7199

CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING SERVICES
Suite 1901, 20 Eglinton Ave. W.
Toronto, ON M4R 1K8
(416) 489-3350

• Marriage & family counselling
• Individual & group therapy
• Vocational assessments
• Seminars & workshops
• Conflict mediation to business
• Accredited AAMFT supervision for marriage and family therapists
• CAPE supervision

Chapter & Verse



Wayne Brouwer
* Andrew Kuyvenhoven
Laura Smit
Al Wolters

'The millennium': How does Scripture view it?

Many North American Christians believe that when Christ returns he will establish an in-between state of heavenly peace and earthly prosperity for a thousand years. Only after the thousand years have run their course and after a last Satanic rebellion has shattered the peace of that millenium, Christ will destroy his enemies, and sin and death will be no more.

Faith in this future millenium is fed by two sources. First, most millennialists believe that there are a great number of Old Testament promises to Israel that have not yet been fulfilled. And these promises about a rebuilt Jerusalem, a regathered Israel, a restored temple, a revived kingdom of the Son of David must be literally fulfilled, they say, during the thousand years when Satan is chained in the bottomless pit as recorded in Revelation 20:1-10. They get their picture of the millenium from Old Testament prophecies. And the time-frame, the thousand years, comes from Revelation 20.

Interpreting Scripture in light of conclusions

The combination of these two sources is not very convincing because the Old Testament kingdom promises say nothing about the thousand years; and the vision about the thousand years in Rev. 20:1-10 says absolutely nothing about Israel, Jerusalem, earthly kingdom of Jesus, prosperity, the temple, and so on.

Nevertheless, millennial faith and fantasy are as old as Christianity itself — actually as old as Judaism. The Reformed tradition has never condemned a millennial faith. And Reformed preachers seem to ignore this complicated subject.

Herman Bavinck (1854-1921) has a very strong argument against millennialism in that section of his systematic theology which has just been translated into English by John Vriend and edited by John Bolt (*The Last Things*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996, 205 pp.). Perhaps, while we approach A.D. 2000, preachers in Reformed churches will find inspiration in this book to speak of "the last things."

The big difference between millennialists and the Reformed is that we interpret Revelation 20 in the light of the rest of the New Testament, but millennialists attempt to read the rest of the New Testament in the light of what they believe to be the teaching of Revelation 20.

A theological anomaly

Even apart from the interpretation of the various Scripture passages, several questions should be asked: What would be God's purpose in adding one thousand years to the world's history while Jesus reigns (visibly) but sin and death continue to exist?

And: Why should Christ have to fight a battle with Satan at the beginning and again at the end of the 1000 years; wasn't his victory by his death and resurrection a complete victory? The Bible distinguishes between "the present age" and "the age to come." But such a millennium would be better than the present age, yet inferior to the age to come. It's what Anthony Hoekema called, "a theological anomaly." That means, in biblical terms, it makes no sense. (Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979, p.186).

Andrew Kuyvenhoven is writing a book about the return of the Lord but doesn't know if he can finish it before that Day. He lives in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Church addition brings congregation under one steeple

Bert Witvoet

ACTON, Ont. — The sign in front of Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Acton read: "It's done. It's just beginning!!" It was a reference to the completion of the church's new addition and the task that awaits.

Organized in 1953, Bethel first worshiped in a basement, then built the church on top a few years later.

Ali Looyenga recalls those days. Building a church at that time was not always accompanied by harmonious debates, she says. But this time around, building a new addition proved to be an experience that pulled the congregation together.

"There was so much excitement and volunteer labor," she says with emotion in her voice. "Everything was such a combined effort."

The new addition cost $400,000 and includes a large fellowship hall that continues the sanctuary, a kitchen, offices for the pastor and the secretary, classrooms, nursery, washrooms and an elevator. Half of the cost was raised before the building program started. The rest was borrowed from the Extension Fund of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada.

There were three reasons for building the addition, says Looyenga, who is a member of the building committee and also functions as the church treasurer and secretary. "We needed handicap access, more meeting rooms and a fellowship hall." Bethel has a membership role of 346 and a total of 86 families.

It runs an active Coffee Break program that draws 75 women, more than half of them from outside the congregation.

The addition was designed by Jonker Graca Architects (Roland Jonker) of Toronto. Contractor and project manager was Lohr Builders from Kitchener.

The church is even going to have a steeple, says Looyenga.

COURTESY BETHEL CRC

From l. to r.: John Proper (85) laid the cornerstones of 1963 and 1996, assisted by Jake Adema and council chair John Leferink.

1 million Promise Keepers and counting

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (EP) — Promise Keepers, a continent-wide Christian ministry for men, surpassed the one-million mark for stadium attendance at 1996 stadium conferences at its mid-October conference in Jacksonville, Fla. The 54,011 men gathered in Jacksonville's Municipal Stadium brought 1996 attendance to 1,035,056 with one conference still to be held in Texas Stadium.

W&H VOORTMAN® LTD.
TRADITIONAL FAMILY BAKING QUALITY GUARANTEED

Voortman

Over 40 Varieties of Fine Cookies

C.E.C.

CHURCH ENVELOPE COMPANY INC.

P.O. Box 1184 Postal Station "B" Mississauga, ON L4Y 3W5

- Weekly Budget Envelopes
- Contributions Recording Systems
- Beautiful bulletin covers for all occasions — ask for samples

John and Henny Tjoelker: Phone (905) 277-0576 Fax: (905) 277-5779

Feature

The day God got lost

in Paris

Michael R. Geisterfer

It was a hot and humid August day. A group of us had just returned from Paris, having spent the weekend roaming its ancient streets, visiting Montmartre, the Louvre and Notre Dame Cathedral. We were hot and tired, happy to be home.

Home at this point in my life was Jean Vanier's L'Arche community in northern France, about two hours north of Paris by train. Though Canadian, this son of a former governor-general of Canada had come to France 30 years earlier to start a home for himself and two developmentally handicapped men, Raphael and Philippe. I had come just a year earlier, straight from the jungles of Central America where I had spent 18 months tramping through back roads and goat paths, talking to *campesinos*, missionaries, soldiers and political pundits as a war correspondent for a Canadian newspaper.

I had initially gone down to Central America in search of an answer to an admittedly complex theological question: Why does God allow acts of evil to occur? If he is so strong and powerful, why doesn't he do something to stop evil from happening? I thought if I went down to Central America I would get an answer, and I did, but not the one I wanted.

The face of death

When I first arrived in Central America I spent a lot of my time interviewing people on why the war was taking place, trying to find out perhaps who was right and who was wrong. Everyone, of course, had a different spin on the subject. The Americans thought they were fighting for democracy while trying to eradicate the scourge of Communism. The Sandinistas thought they were fighting for justice and freedom from the tyranny of American Imperialism. Et cetera. There were a lot of words and a lot of ideas explaining the wars, but nothing really substantive to satisfy my curiosity.

Eventually I started moving out of the larger urban centres where all the political spin-doctors were and into the *campo*, the countryside, where the killing actually took place. I began to see the face of death, the faces of farmers caught by the death squads, their severed heads impaled on fenceposts along the highways as grim reminders to the rest of the population that opposition to the military does not pay.

One day while travelling through the countryside in El Salvador, our bus was stopped at a remote military checkpoint in the heart of the war zone. We were all forced to disembark to have our bags checked. Across the highway another bus had been stopped and everyone was lounging about, talking, laughing, eating mangoes that little kids in tattered shorts were selling for five centavos apiece. It was a hot afternoon, and there was almost a carnival atmosphere in the air.

A powerless God?

The soldiers continued going through the bags of the passengers, checking for papers and guns, when they came to a couple of teenagers, two young farm boys on their way to the coffee plantation to earn some money. The soldiers rummaged through their bags but there was a problem: no travelling papers. We must have forgotten them, the boys said. We'll just go back home and get them. They were all smiles, exuding confidence. But the soldier shook his head. Come with me, he said, and he led them out behind the bus. Then he began conferring with the other soldiers.

A few minutes passed and you could tell the farm boys were getting a little worried. They might be taken for questioning and that would mean missing a day's pay in the coffee fields. There were undoubtedly kids back home waiting for the few centavos they earn to buy rice and tortillas.

When the soldier finally came back, the boys smiled at him hopefully. The soldier pulled a piece of string out of his pocket. Instantly their smiled disappeared. Fearful glances passed between them. I noticed a trickle of urine running down the leg of one of the boys. They were told to lie face down in the dust beside the road, hands behind their backs. Their thumbs were tied together, and then, as casually as if he were lighting a cigarette, the soldier cocked his rifle, placed the barrel in the small of the neck of first one, then the other, each time pulling the trigger.

My horror at witnessing this was accentuated by the questions that immediately began to torment me. Where were you, God? Why did you not protect those two innocent boys from the carnage? As time passed and more such scenes unfolded before me, resignation set in: maybe he couldn't. Maybe God just wasn't powerful enough.

I was fed

A few months later I left Central America a deeply troubled young man. Through a circuitous route I ended up in France on the doorstep of Jean Vanier's L'Arche community. I had no illusions about coming to help the poor. I was so wounded and exhausted from the war that I simply needed a place to rest, and someone to tend to my pain. In coming to L'Arche I thought perhaps Jean Vanier would be the one to do all that, but I was wrong. The nourishment and repose I received came to me through the hands of the handicapped men and women for whom L'Arche was as close to *home* as many of them had ever experienced.

While there, I was told this story: A certain King held a banquet wherein he invited a select number of people from across his kingdom. During the banquet he invited each one of them in turn to come up to the head table where he thanked them personally for the acts of kindness they had shown him. "When I was hungry, you fed me. When I was thirsty, you gave me something to eat," he said, going on to describe each of their individual acts of generosity.

Where were you God? Why did you not protect those two innocent boys from the carnage?

"But master," they replied, "you must be mistaken, for we have never met you in person." The King then revealed to them that he had often travelled through his kingdom *incognito*, disguised as a lowly beggar.

I was deeply struck by the wisdom of this tale, recognizing its obvious connection to Matthew 25. Slowly, a light began to dawn in me. Whereas I had been desperately searching for God all my life, he had been waiting for me to open my eyes and see him. There is an old American spiritual that asks: "Where you there when they crucified my Lord?" I suddenly realized that, in fact, I was there. I saw it happen on the lonely stretch of highway in El Salvador. God never stopped it from happening, but neither did I. I couldn't. I don't know how to stop wars.

I can hear God saying to me gently: you begin with small acts of kindness to the least of these my children.

We will never know

Which brings me to that hot August day in Paris. Another group had gone to Paris for the weekend. While there, one of the handicapped persons, a small man named Yvon had gotten lost. They searched for him everywhere, to no avail. When night fell, there was still no trace of him. The police were called. Search parties spent the entire night scouring the streets of Paris looking for him. With no speech and few coping skills, it is unlikely he would be able to survive the night alone.

Morning came with still no sign of him. Hours stretched into days. Days into weeks. By this time a terrible gloom had settled on the community of L'Arche. Yvon was given up for dead.

Then one day, two weeks later, a telephone call came in from the police in Paris. They had found Yvon and he had not a scratch on him. He was as healthy and well-fed as he had been the day he was lost. Incredibly, he still had the same amount of money in his pocket as he had before.

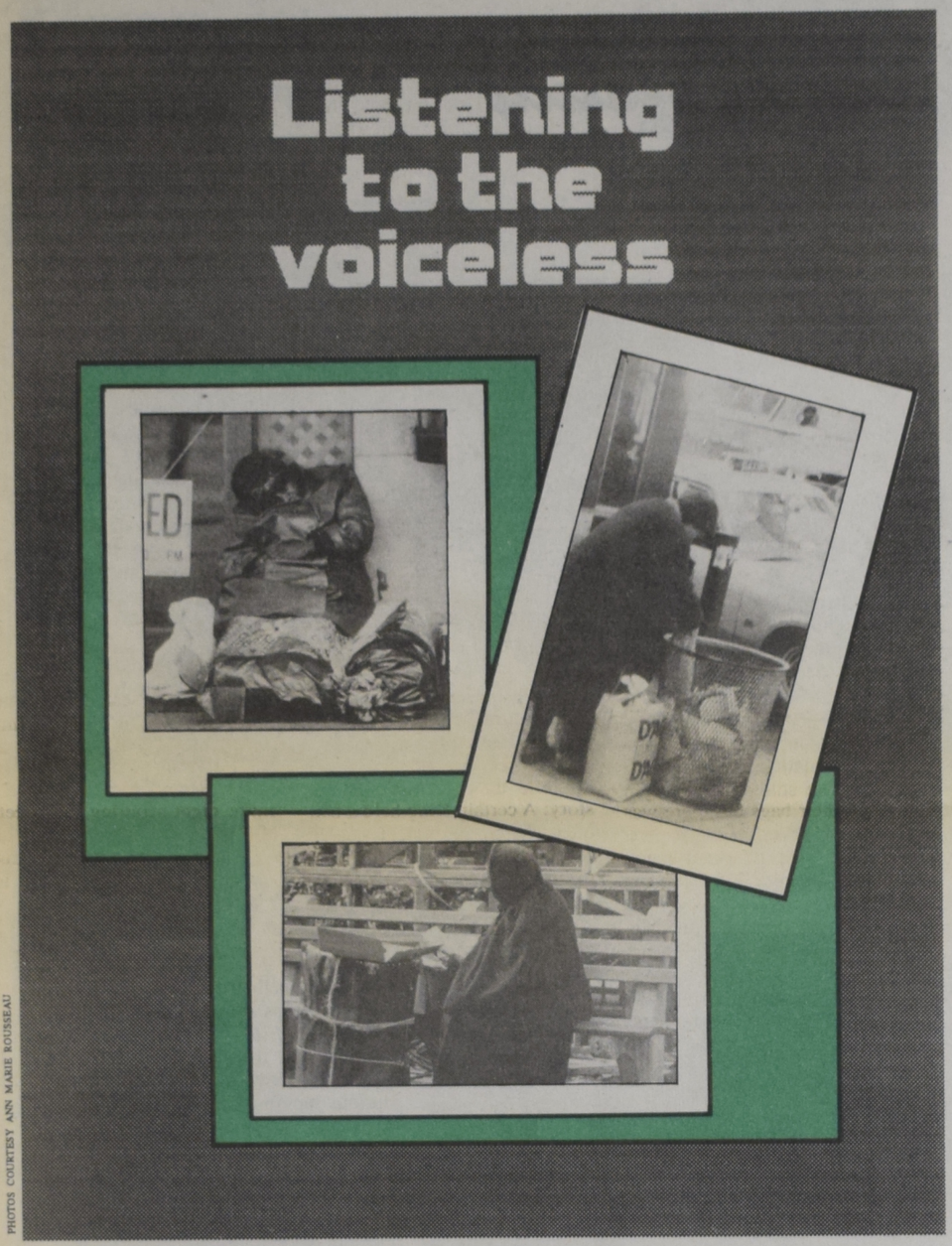
Unfortunately, Yvon cannot talk so we will never know what happened during those two weeks. The only thing we do know is that somewhere in Paris there are a number of people who not only met God, but gave him something to eat, some water to drink and a few coins to send him on his way. And the funny thing is, they will never know.

Never, that is, until the day they stand before his throne in heaven and he says to them, "Do you remember that day in Paris?"

Michael Geisterfer is a writer and social worker who lives in Aylmer, Ont.

Feature

Listening to the voiceless



PHOTOS COURTESY ANN MARIE ROUSSEAU

Jan Johnson

The sleek businessman bolted across the street against the traffic signal. He barely made it, accidentally shoving my friend, Delsinore, and me as we stood at the curb. He looked at me and said, "I'm sorry — excuse me." He said nothing to Delsinore, probably because she's a bag lady.

After a minute, I tapped the man on the shoulder, smiled, and said, "You bumped her too. Please apologize to her."

Eyebrows went up around me as the man mumbled an apology. I was thrilled to have requested a small token of courtesy for Dels, but I also winced at the snickers of those around me and imagining their thoughts: *What's this white Lady Bountiful doing with a black woman pushing a shopping cart?*

Knowing Delsinore is reinforcing what I already know. Every society has its hierarchy of worthiness and people like Delsinore are among the lowest on the ladder. Seeing how people treat her reminds me of how all of us tend to withhold respect, concern and even justice from those lower on the ladder than ourselves. When we do this, we render such people voiceless.

The silence of voiceless people grows out of their powerless positions in society: residents of lower class neighborhood; the poorly paid; the handicapped; the aging; the less intelligent; unskilled laborers; even children, when they're routinely talked down to. We don't take them seriously because they don't have the status, money, age or know-how to command our respect.

God regards them differently.

God, the guardian of the needy

Many of those who are voiceless match the biblical categories of the needy: the widow, the fatherless and the alien (or "sojourner" or "stranger"). God didn't speak of giving them "equality" and "fair treatment," but instead he recognized the human tendency to treat them unequally and unfairly and declared himself their guardian: "Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise," says the Lord. "I will protect them from those who malign them" (Psalm 12:5).

God mounted attacks against those who cheated the needy. He commissioned Israel to become public defenders, so to speak, defending the causes of the needy and pleading their cases (Prov. 23:10-11; Ps. 82:3; Is. 1:17).

Some of us respond by sponsoring children overseas and donating clothes to downtown street missions. Participating in these worthwhile efforts satisfies our uneasiness until we walk past a homeless family living in their car; or we get frustrated trying to buy gum from someone who can't speak our language; or we watch the house or car next door become shabby when a father walks out on a family.

We battle within ourselves: sure we need more homeless shelters, but not on my street; let people immigrate, only don't let their limited English slow me down as I run errands; it's a shame couples break up, but it makes the neighborhood look bad when weeds take over their yard.

Suddenly the faces of the voiceless look more familiar. We find that giving away money and old clothing is much easier than becoming a guardian, rescuer and defender of people who may cramp our style.

So we experiment. We may make phone calls to find shelters for families and direct that family in the car to a shelter. We may expect to have to work to understand the broken English of the woman selling us gum. We may offer to mow the lawn for the family whose father just left.

Part of the appeal of Jesus in the gospels is the way he counted the people his culture called "losers" as better than himself. Christ took women and children seriously in an age when they were unimportant. He singled out the sick, the demon-possessed and the poor in spirit and treated them with respect. He never talked down to such people.

My relationship with Delsinore is teaching me that kind of respect. When I first met her, I offered to take her to a shelter, but she told me she liked the streets better. I gave her bags of oranges whenever I saw her, but then I found out she gave them away because her teeth were too loose to eat them.

In my conversations with God, I offered these frustrations to him: I want to be effective; I want her to appreciate my help; I question how deserving she is. I'm finally realizing that my "charity" isn't about her, but about my need to feel like "a good Christian." One day sitting on the bench at a bus stop together, I asked her, "What is the most helpful thing I could do for you?"

"Sit here and talk to me," she said. "Nobody talks to me. People look right through me."

A command not easily obeyed

Her words were like a whack on the head. Of course! Christ sat and dined and talked, as well as operating his own divine medical clinic and food pantry (feeding 5000 at a time). He respected people and asked them questions. To look into someone's eyes and ask them what they need instead of foisting our own blessings on them places the voiceless in a position of empowerment for once. They talk and we listen.

Christ also stayed out of that pious "power-up" position by identifying closely with voiceless people: "Whatever you did for one of the least of those brothers of mine [the hungry, the thirsty, the sick and the imprisoned], you did for me" (Matt. 25:40). He knew a solidarity with the voiceless so that their hunger became his hunger and their imprisonment became his imprisonment.

Giving a voice to the voiceless isn't always a tidy, neat little command easily obeyed. More often, it's messy and open-ended. We may cry over injustice one day and gloss over it the next. God doesn't ask us to reform the world, but to show respect and concern to each person he's put in our path, going the extra mile with those our society overlooks. It's a struggle, but in the best moments we see Christ's face on the faces of voiceless people and we offer him respect and concern. In moments when we don't, we express our regret to a Father who never renders us voiceless; and we find comfort there.

Jan Johnson is a retreat speaker and author of Enjoying the Presence of God. She lives in Simi, Calif.

Feature

A miracle of beauty

Jen VanderBeek

I enjoy gardening.

This year, like most years, I went to the local greenhouse and bought a selection of little annuals for the garden. Once I'd mopped up the dirt and the water and the fertilizer from my table, I considered the labels sticking in the damp soil in each little clay pot there on the windowsill. In a moment of decision, and relying heavily on the old adage that anticipation is half the fun, I pulled the labels out of the soil and threw them all into the trash can.

My little plants all looked rather similar at first. A bit of green with an occasional sprout of a leaf, and a thin awkward stem. But even from the start I could see that my plants were very different. The large rounded leaves and the supple green shine on one of the little plants invited a proud smile whenever I looked at it. One of the young plants responded so well to the tiniest drink of water that I took a particular joy in caring for it. Another of the seedlings leaned warmly toward the sunshine in a delicate and so determined way that I happily turned it daily. One plant seemed to gain a new leaf every day, and I was encouraged in my success as a green thumb.

But there was a little plant among all the rest that seemed intent on withering away. It had a thin rumpled leaf and a spiny stem. No matter how I watered it and turned it towards the sunshine, this little plant would not grow. I held its sharp, thin stem between my fingers and my heart beat for the weakness of it. I willed it to live and thrive, and so I cared for it as I did for all the others. Even though there seemed no reward for my efforts.

The weeks passed and I watched the greenery on my windowsill flourish.

CC FILES

Finally one day the season came and I knew that it was time to bring my plants outside where they would adorn the front walk with the colors that must soon bud forth.

Again there was dirt to clean up. I looked at the now empty windowsill and through the glass at the little green heads bobbing and swaying in the breeze outside. My tasks changed at this point. It became the responsibility of the elements to water and light my plants. I still cared for them all but I was no longer their only source of nurture.

The weather warmed up and it seemed a good opportunity to go away, so I left the list of instructions for the boy. The bright yellow and pink and orange and blue petals waved and bowed as I bid the plants goodbye. In the midst of them all stood my little weak one. Though it had grown somewhat and gained a few new leaves, it still bore no flowers. The prickled stem bore only a dull round ball at its top. It looked weak and rough and hideous. But I had grown to love the little plant and I was encouraged that it still lived and that seemed enough.

The boy cut the grass and weeded the flowers. And he told me later that he had helped me for he stepped on the weak little plant in the garden. He thought it could not belong amid all the healthy lovely little flowers.

The stem was not broken but it was badly bent. The round bulb at the top was crushed but not flat. The boy helped me for he could see he'd misjudged. We used a small stick and a small length of string and I bound up the small plant. And I cried. Now it must surely die at last.

Weeks passed and the colors in my garden swelled in their magnificence. I sat many hours admiring the brilliant evidence of my hard work and the beauty that was beyond me. The boy came sometimes to help me. I tried not to look too long at the struggling, broken little plant whose thorns and leaves hardly seemed worthy of praise, for it made me feel sad.

And then one day I came to the garden and I found a miracle.

A bloom more beautiful then all the others sang out its presence with sharp rhythms of reds and purples, magentas and violets. The round petals, superior in their shape and size to all the other flowers around it, nodded regally in the breeze. Velvet and silk seemed to make up this bloom. And there wafted such a tender sweet perfume from the bloom that I felt its beauty deep within me.

And I sang. For, of course, it was the broken little plant that now lifted up this gift.

The boy and I shared another lemonade. He too had come to love the plant, so together we celebrated. He told me that he had known it all along and I let him think I believed him.

Now it is fall and the plants are beginning their decline in earnest as the cold weather creeps closer. The fading petals are hurrying to steal the sun's last warmth. And the little plant is covered with straw now. It bore another three glorious blooms this summer. Next summer I think it will bear even more.

For it wasn't just nurture that made it grow. And it wasn't just perseverance that made it grow. And it wasn't just nature that made it grow. And it wasn't just love that made it grow.

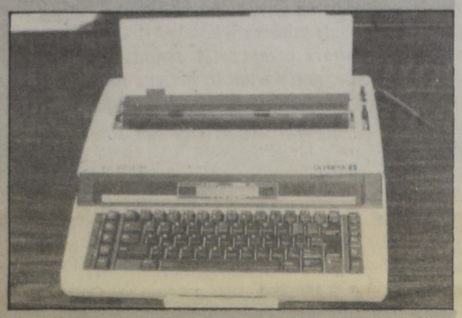
It was all of that. Plus a lot more. It was God. Especially God — who used a little broken plant to reveal his grace to me. And his nurture. And his perseverance. And his creation. And his love. Plus a lot more!

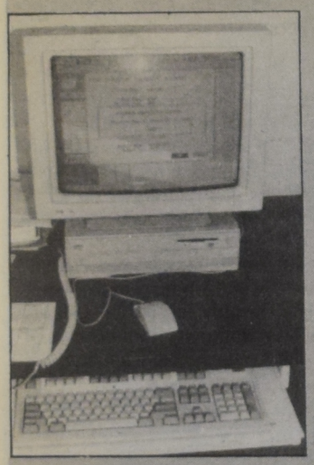
For these I thank and praise him!

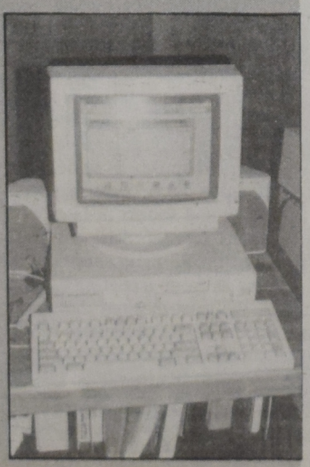
Jen VanderBeek is a mother of five children who wrote this parable after one of her children came home with a disappointing report card. She lives in Forest, Ont.

Feature

Time is relative or: When does technology catch up with us?







PHOTOS: MARIAN VAN TIL

Bill Van Dyk

One of my hobbies is to write long-winded novels and try to get them published. I was in college when I wrote my very first one, long-hand, on about 500 sheets of three-hole loose-leaf. I made revisions on the original manuscript and then rewrote it again in long-hand. I did the final version on two sheets of paper at a time with a carbon in between on an old IBM Selectric typewriter a friend and I had purchased together for $200. I was lucky because I had taken typing in high school, so I thought I was pretty quick at about 30 words-a-minute. But I was not very accurate: I must have used about a gallon of white-out. It took me three months to finish the final copy.

I wrote my second novel in 1981 on a Smith Corona portable typewriter. My typing had improved to about 50 words-a-minute, and I had this "correction ribbon" which allowed me to type over mistakes. But I still used white-out occasionally, since it was difficult to match the errors exactly, especially if you got near the bottom of the page and the paper had slipped out of the platen. It was almost impossible to re-insert the paper so that the lines would match.

What I liked most about doing the original manuscript on the typewriter was that I could type almost as quickly as I could formulate the sentence in my mind. When I had been writing in long hand, I frequently found that by the time I had written the first part of a sentence down, I had forgotten how I was going to end it. Typing the final copy seemed a breeze, because I was copying *from* a typewritten copy. It took me only three weeks.

In 1984 I finally acquired the writer's dream, a personal computer. It was an Apple IIc, a very advanced machine for its day.

In 1984 I finally acquired the writer's dream, a personal computer. It was an Apple IIc, a very advanced machine for its day. It had 128K memory (of which it could use only 64K at a time), and used floppy disks capable of holding about 60 typewritten pages. It took a long time to "boot" and I remember turning the machine on and going off to make myself a coffee because it took so long to load in the operating system and the program. I also remember how shocked and disappointed I was when I discovered that Bank Street Writer, my first word processor, could only hold about five pages of text in the computer's memory.

Technological heaven

Eventually, I switched to AppleWorks, which could hold about 35 pages and — a real bonus — came with an integrated spreadsheet and data base. I wrote my third novel entirely on the Apple, and it took 10 disks to hold the entire manuscript. I thought I was in technological heaven. Revisions were a breeze. Paragraphs could be moved around at will. No retyping of the manuscript every time I made a change. Character's names could be altered with "search and replace." Formatting and page-numbering was automatic. On printing day, I hooked up a brand new Apple Image Writer 9 pin dot matrix printer and a box of fanfold paper and spent nine hours printing and collating and, of course, separating the sheets and tearing off the sprocket guides along the perforated edges. I was very pleased. From three months to nine hours. *This* was progress.

About two years later, I acquired my first IBM compatible, a no-name XT clone with 640K memory and a very sharp amber monochrome monitor. It ran at a blazing seven megahertz and, best of all, had a 30 megabyte hard disk. I was fortunate to have an employer that was very interested in developing computer systems, so I was provided with Word Perfect 4.1, Lotus 1-2-3, and dBase III+.

The first thing I wanted to do, of course, was transfer my novel from my Apple ProDos disks to IBM compatible Dos 2.1 disks. This seemed impossible at first. No one I talked to had a solution. At last, I found an ad in a computer magazine for a device that "magically" allowed IBM computers to read the Apple ProDos disks. It worked like a charm. I was even more pleased with Word Perfect, which was capable of holding an entire manuscript of 500 pages in memory at one time (though, in fact, it stored a good part of the document on the hard disk in "virtual" memory). I tested a copy of "Typing Tutor" once and found that I had reached the blazing speed of 90 words per minute.

I wrote my third novel entirely on the Apple, and it took 10 disks to hold the entire manuscript. I thought I was in technological heaven.

I recently finished my fifth novel. I wrote it on an IBM compatible 80386 clone running at 40 megahertz, with eight megabytes of memory and a 250 megabyte disk drive, a color VGA high resolution monitor with 1 MB of its own memory.

I used Word for Windows with a graphical interface which displayed all the formatting and the TrueType fonts exactly as they would appear on the printed page. I printed the manuscript on a Hewlett Packard Laser Jet IV in a font called Garmond Antiqua, at a resolution of 600 dots per inch.

It took about 45 minutes to print the 350-page manuscript.

As I stood there waiting for the final pages to eject, I caught myself thinking something that I should not have been thinking:

"Does it have to take so long?"

Bill Van Dyk is a computer consultant who lives in Kitchener, Ont.

Advice

ATTENTION:

Business Community/ Christian Organizations Insert YOUR message in our Special 1996 Christmas Issue

In past years we have supplied members of Christian Reformed churches across Canada with a free copy of the annual Christmas issue. This year we plan to do the same. Date of this issue will be **December 6**. It will be mailed to our regular subscribers on **December 3.**

In addition, we plan to distribute close to 20,000 copies of this issue to Reformed Christians across Canada free of charge.

To print so many extra copies costs money. We are appealing to the business community and to Christian organizations to help us out. Feel free to include your annual Christmas greetings in your ad, as you have done before.

Please do not wait. Take a moment to complete and return the attached coupon. Kindly include precise instructions as to the content of your ad.

Your continued support will be greatly appreciated.

Deadline for advertisements in this special issue is November 20, 1996

COUPON	CHECK ONE
1) Small — size 3" wide x 2" Cost $80 + GST = $85.60	❑
2) Medium — size 5" wide x 3 1/2" Cost $240 + GST = $256.80	❑
3) Large — size 5" wide x 7 1/2" Cost $420 + GST = $449.40	❑
4) Jumbo — size 10" wide x 6" Cost $630 + GST = $674.10	❑
5) Full Page — size 10" wide x 12" Cost $1,000 + GST = $ 1,070.00	❑
6) Sponsored advertising	❑

I do not wish to place my own ad, but will gladly sponsor a Christian organization advertisement. I understand Christian Courier will obtain copy from the organization indicated.

I wish to sponsor and ad for _____

This ad should be the size of

❑ Full page ❑ Jumbo ❑ Large
❑ Medium ❑ Small

Please enclose your ad copy with this coupon.

❑ I enclose payment ❑ Please bill me

Sender: (Please print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Code _____

Return by November 20 to: Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905)682-8311 Fax:(905)682-8313

Peter and Marja are IN

His gay orientation hasn't made him suffer

I am glad to see CC open the door to discussing homosexuality, and I appreciated your attempt to clarify the issues in your Aug. 30 column. I realize it is a contentious issue and I'm sure it's difficult to say anything about it without offending someone. However, I would like to mention a few things that concern me about that column in the hope that you can believe they are coming from one of your strongest fans who appreciates the insight and compassion you bring to complex issues.

I have been openly gay for the past 25 years and have been in a monogamous relationship for over 10 years. My partner and I worship at First Christian Reformed Church, Toronto.

In your outline of the different approaches, you point to our painful struggle — actually you claim we point to our "painful personal struggle," and conclude that "such orientation has been a reason for much suffering" — i.e., that being gay is the cause of our suffering. You later state that the "pain of homosexuality seems to be the suffering that comes when the natural is exchanged for [what you believe is] the unnatural," i.e., our pain comes from accepting our homosexuality as natural for us.

To me, this is a complete misconception and has nothing whatever to do with our lives.

The statement, "While it is true that gay culture seems to be synonymous with anonymous sex..." hits me as a complete smear. It simply isn't true, and I want to believe that if you were more familiar with our lives, you would not be passing this on to your readers.

***The other issue that bothers me** is your speculation about the role that abuse and incest play in causing homosexuality. When a 16-year-old asks for answers about homosexuality do you not think that the leadership of the church should be able to provide this person with the facts that are known and accepted by medical and academic authorities?*

Last spring I grew so sick of the outdated, erroneous and patronizing portrayal of homosexuality in the Acts of Synod 1973, *I sent copies of it to several institutions and asked them to provide me with sources that represented the conclusions of modern research. The results were very gratifying.*

I'm sorry if this letter sounds crabby. I am grateful that people like yourselves, in leadership positions, are now able to present more than one view about gays and lesbians. For us it's a very big step. I also appreciate the warmth you've shown in that column even through the aspects that bother me. However, when I see people writing about gays and lesbians, I assume they are writing about me and my world, and when I read things that appear completely out of line to me, I like to make my presence known. My apologies if I have misread you.

Dear Gay Friend:

Thanks for your written response to our column. Thanks also for being receptive to our telephone call. Speaking with you last week allows us to be more personal in answering you.

Our previous column about homosexuality made some sweeping observations about gays and lesbians. We don't think we need to apologize for doing that because there is a place for making some generalizations about a group. At the same time we fully realize that such generalizations do not fit every individual in that group. That's why we're happy to share your feelings with our readers to promote better understanding. Let's see if we've heard you correctly.

For you, homosexuality is not the cause of your pain; what you perceive to be the church's homophobia is. For you, being gay is not about anonymous sex; it's about being faithful in a monogamous relationship with a male partner. For you, abuse and family environment played no part in your sexual orientation — your genetic make-up is primarily responsible. And for you, the synodical report on homosexuality lacks the latest medical research and offers little comfort because ultimately it does not accept homosexual practice as an alternate lifestyle; it makes you angry!

Unfortunately, your letter made no reference to the biblical passages which prevent the Christian Reformed Church and us from endorsing your lifestyle. We asked you about that in our telephone conversation. You replied honestly and said two things. You admitted that you tend to shy away from Scriptures that condemn homosexuality. You also expressed frustration at the church's refusal to interpret these passages "culturally" so that gays and lesbians are not "demeaned" by them.

So here we are. If human experience were our ultimate reference point, we would probably condone a faithful, long-term homosexual relationship. If science were our ultimate authority, we might conclude that our genetic make-up predisposes us to be homo- or heterosexual. If politics were our biggest influence, we might well agree with every aspect of today's politically correct gay agenda. But the Bible is our final authority; and sooner or later we have to deal with what it says. You suggested John Boswell and Tim Pronk as scholars who culturally interpret the Scripture passages relating to homosexuality. We will try to locate their work and better acquaint ourselves with their interpretation of the passages that prevent us from accepting homosexual practice.

Speaking with you was very helpful. We trust that our dialogue helps you to see that our dilemma is not rooted in homophobia but in a sincere desire to yield to the Word of God.

Write to: P & M, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5V6.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

Study links abortion with increased breast cancer risk

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — Women who have an induced abortion have a 30 per cent higher risk of developing breast cancer, according to researchers who examined all 23 studies conducted to date which examine the link between abortion and breast cancer.

"These findings were very consistent around the world, over time, and despite different political systems and nutritional standards," said researcher Joel Brind, a reproductive endocrinologist at Baruch College in New York.

The study was published by the British Medical Association's *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.*

Brind attributed the increased risk of breast cancer to the growth of cells in the breast early in pregnancy. These cells will become milk producers, but most abortions take place before the cells take on that identity, leaving them open to later transformation into cancer cells. Brind said he found no increased risk among women who experienced miscarriages, and attributed that to the fact that estrogen levels have generally not yet increased when a spontaneous abortion takes place.

Combined, the studies looked at 25,967 women with breast cancer and 34,977 without breast cancer. Brind found that 18 of the 23 studies found a link between abortion and breast cancer.

Punctures crucial pro-choice belief

Brind's approach, combining a number of other studies, is known as "meta-analysis." It is used to find cause-effect relationships too subtle to show up reliably in single studies.

The findings have been controversial, with a number of other researchers rejecting the idea of a link between abortion and breast cancer, and others calling the increased risk "modest." Brind attributes controversy over his study to the medical community's desire to continue to believe that abortion is as safe for the mother as childbirth — a view he calls "crucial to the pro-choice movement."

Janet Daling, a pro-choice epidemiologist at the Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, defended Brind's research as "statistically beyond reproach" and noted that his findings matched her own.

Daling said the politics surrounding abortion have made it difficult to do this kind of research. "If politically sensitive issues cannot be looked at in science with an open mind, then it is really going to set back our knowledge on the causes of cancer," she told the *Wall Street Journal.*

Warning required

Three states (Louisiana, Mississippi and Montana) have already enacted policies which ensure that women considering abortion will be warned about the risks of breast cancer. In Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, subway riders recently saw anti-abortion billboards with the message: "Women Who Choose Abortion Suffer More and Deadlier Breast Cancer."

CALL THE NETHERLANDS FROM 31¢ A MINUTE.

THE BEST SAVINGS. GUARANTEED
No Matter Where or When You Call
with no monthly minimum

Wish you could spend more time calling friends or family in the Netherlands? Switch to Sprint Canada.

Compared to your local telephone company's best calling plan, THE MOST™ savings plan from Sprint Canada gives you the best monthly savings, wherever or whenever you call. Guaranteed.

With THE MOST savings plan, you save 50% on every call to the three numbers you spend the most on each month: one overseas, one in Canada, and one in the U.S.
And you always save 15% on all your other calls.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:
Let's say you spend the most calling the Netherlands.
Your local telephone company's best rate is 47¢ a minute (excluding first minute), **if you spend a minimum of $40 each month.**
The same call with Sprint Canada is only 31¢ a minute (excluding first minute), **no matter how much you spend each month!**

	First Minute	Each Additional
THE NETHERLANDS Local Phone Co.	$0.70	$0.47
Sprint Canada	$0.47	$0.31

LOCAL PHONE CO.'S BEST RATES: 6:00 P.M.-9:00 A.M.

Wherever you spend the most, you save the most.
Call Sprint Canada today.

Get THE MOST FOR THE LEAST™

THE MOST™ SAVINGS PLAN

Sprint Canada

CALL 1-800-843-9988
24 HOURS, 7 DAYS A WEEK.

TM., ®: Sprint, the Sprint logo, THE MOST, THE MOST logo and THE MOST FOR THE LEAST are trademarks of Sprint Communications Company L.P. used under licence by Sprint Canada Inc. © Sprint Canada Inc., 1996.

Classifieds

Classified Rates

(Revised February 1, 1995)

Births	$25.00
Marriages & Engagements	$40.00
Anniversaries	$45.00
2-column anniversaries	$90.00
Obituaries	$45.00
Notes of thanks	$35.00
Birthdays	$40.00

All other one-column classified advertisements: $15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $15.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge.

Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

ATTENTION!

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.,

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. *Christian Courier* reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a one-year subscription for only $25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $25.00 and the couple's correct address.

Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905) 682-8311
Fax: (905) 682-8313

ATTENTION!

If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:

- send printed or typed copy
- include billing address
- include contact person with phonenumber.

Thank You.

Thank You

HUININK:

I would like to thank all of my friends and acquaintances for your overwhelming response on the occasion of my 80th birthday with your personal calling and well-wishes by mail. I especially thank my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren for the love and support you have shown me. The Lord has truly blessed me.

Jozina Huinink, Burlington, Ont.

SCHWEITZER:

We would like to thank all of our friends, church community and family members for making our 60th anniversary a beautiful day of celebration. The many cards, phone calls and visits have been overwhelming. The Lord has truly blessed us through all of you. With much thankfulness in our hearts.

Johan and Johanna Schweitzer.

Anniversaries

1956 November 10 1996

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord" (Ps.116:12-13).

We praise and joyfully thank our wonderful heavenly Father for blessing

BILL and TONI BUMA
(nee ANDRINGA)

with 40 years of wedded happiness. We pray that he will continue to bless and keep them for each other and us. Thanks Dad and Mom (Pake and Beppe) for all your love, support and prayers. Happy 40th anniversary! Love, your family:

Ann & Brian Dykstra — Dunsford, Ont.
Trevor, Sheryl, Larissa, Sheenah
Simon Buma — Bowmanville, Ont.
Lisa & Dave Doorenspleet — Bowmanville, Ont.
Jolene
John Buma & Claudette Levesque (fiancee) — Bowmanville

Home address: R.R. #1, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2

Personal

ONE TO ANOTHER

Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue $5. Write to:
#302, 1502-2nd Ave. S.
Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2

Anniversaries

1946 November 21 1996

With joy and thanksgiving, we celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

RALPH and JENNIE NUMAN
(nee LAMSMA)

"Thy Word is a lamp to my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps.119:105).

We praise God for His faithfulness to you in the past and pray that He will continue to bless you in the years to come.

Congratulations, Mom and Dad, Opa and Oma.

Children and grandchildren:
Jim & Gina Numan
Angela & Eric, Chris (Stacey), Terry (Jacinda), David, Renee, Jessica, James
Ida & Bert Piel
Jayson (Tammy), Tammie, Josh (Denise), Matt
John & Ruth Numan
Denise (Mike), Deb & Dave, Steve, Mike, Rachel, Mark
Mary & Bill Piel
Dave, Kevin, Jesse, Ross, Rachel, Sarah
Teena & Kim Willoughby
Mark, Karen

An open house will be held, D.V., on Saturday, Nov. 23, 1996, from 2-4 p.m., at the Community Chr. Ref. Church, 1275 Bleams Rd., Kitchener, Ont.

Best wishes only.

Home address: 276 Normandy Ave., Waterloo, ON N2K 1X7

1931 1996

Great is your faithfulness o Lord.

On Nov. 12, 1996,

JACOBUS and CATHARINA WEVER
(SCHURER)

hope to celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary.

We pray that God will continue to bless and keep them in His care.

Congratulations Mom and Dad. With love from your family.

Freda & Wietse v/d Bergs
Tony & Jean Wever
Nick & Minety Wever
Ann & John Kempenaar
John & Willy Wever
Susan & Keith Ippel
Dirk & Anna-Marie Wever
Mary & Sam Rekker
Rennie & Ken Keuning
Bert & Wilma Wever
Roeli & Carl Brink
39 grandchildren and spouses and 42 great-grandchildren.

Home address: R.R. #6, Belleville, ON K8N 4Z6

For Sale

For Sale: Hammond organ, Model H, two full keyboards and pedals. Built-in Leslie speakers. Make an offer!

Phone (905) 655-4660.

Obituaries

"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer" (1 Peter 3:12a).

The Lord took home our beloved nephew

PETER BAARDA

on Nov. 1, 1996, in his 40th year.

Thanks to the Lord for His comfort to Peter's parents, brothers, sisters, and in-laws.

Pieter and Karen Baarda,
St. Catharines, Ont.

"The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want" (Ps.23).

On Sunday, Nov. 3, 1996, the Lord took home his child

ANNIE COLYN-TEITSMA

Beloved wife of the late Willem Colyn (1980).

Loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother of:

Tini & Frank Teeuwsen — Vineland Station
Chris & Jo-Anne (Rebecca, Michael, Trevor), Jo-ann, Brenda, Bill & Mary (Amy, Aaron), Nancy & Dave
Bert Colyn — St. Catharines
Michael, Lorrie
Liz & John VanRyn — Grimsby
Sue & Tony (Ashley, Stephanie), Jim & Sherri (Kaitlin, Nicholas), Judy, John
Bill & Alida Colyn — St. Catharines
Paul, Cheryl & Greg Stewart, Kimberly

Funeral service was held at Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines, Ont., on Nov. 5, 1996, Pastor W. VanderWerf officiating.

The Lord called home

GEERT DIEMER

after a three-year struggle with Multiple Myeloma. He died peacefully and with dignity in his sleep, surrounded by his family, on Oct. 20, 1996.

Born in the Netherlands on May 14, 1909, he brought his family to Canada in 1951.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Jantje.

Daughters Henny Diemer and Helen DuCloux.

Sons Jans, Johan and Harry.

18 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

He was decorated in 1948 by Juliana, Queen of the Netherlands, for acts of bravery during the Second World War.

A memorial service to celebrate his life was held on Oct. 24, 1996.

Correspondence address:
Jans Diemer, 4539 Emily Carr Drive, Victoria, BC V8X 2N5.

You'll find "Church News" on page 18...

Obituaries

After a fierce struggle with cancer for the last four months, the Lord took home to glory

TJEERD (GEORGE) HOEKSTRA

at his residence, on Monday, Oct. 21, 1996, at the age of 73.

Beloved husband of Henka Hoekstra (nee Eerdmans).

Dear father of:
Peter & Leemore Hoekstra
Karen & Carl Van Belle
John Hoekstra

Loving opa of Sarah, Rebeccah, Rachel, Peter, George, Sarah, Amanda, Michelle and Carlene.

Dear brother of Sieberen and the late Lolkje Hoekstra, the Neth.

Dear cousin to:
Rex & Carol Hoekstra — Orillia, Ont.
Don & Mary Hoekstra — Port Perry, Ont.
Hieke Hoekstra Bruinsma — the Neth.
Tjeerd & Minke Hoekstra — the Neth.
Lolkje Inberg Hoekstra — the Neth.

The funeral service was held in the Rehoboth Chr. Ref. Church in Bowmanville, Ont. Interment at Bowmanville cemetery.

"And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps.23:6b).

March 14, 1942 - Oct. 28, 1996

A hand shall beckon,
a voice shall call: I open
heaven and earth and abyss
and we shall hear
and we shall rise
and laugh and shout for joy and live.

Fought and won, she has left before us

SYLVIA
HOFLAND-WESTENDORP

from Sixlaan 8, Hillegom, the Netherlands.

Beppe Westendorp
Don & Norma Westendorp
Clara & Ray Bouma
Ruby & Gary Charron
Ed & Joanne Hofland
Bram & Ineke Hofland
Marianne & Rien den Otter
Bert & Ati Hofland
nieces and nephews.

Den Ilp Bilthoven
May 7, 1903 - Nov. 4, 1996

The Lord took up into His heavenly home

ANTJE MOLENAAR-GONS

Loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Predeceased by her husband Jacob Molenaar in 1972, and son-in-law Jan Goede in 1996.

She leaves behind, her children:
Jaap & Hanneke Molenaar — Maassluis
Antoon & Frouk Molenaar — Den Ilp
Wil & Panc Batelaan — Woudenberg
Ann Goede — Landsmeer
Andy & Nel Molenaar — Langley, B.C.
Johan & Nel Molenaar — Den Ilp
Henk & Ans Molenaar — Castricum
Rita Molenaar — Hoorn

Also remembered by 29 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Correspondence address:
J.A. Molenaar, 9093 Wright St., Langley, BC V1M 3T3

Classifieds

Obituaries

Anloo, Dr. Brampton, Ont.
Aug. 26, 1909 - Oct. 21, 1996

With sadness in our hearts we announce the peaceful dying of our dear mother and grandmother

JANTJE LISE TIENKAMP

We rejoice with her, however, for continuing to be with Jesus forever.
Her late husband Johan Lise (1905-1973).
Her children:
Jessie & Cor Jansen Van Doorn
Jane, Neil, Marvin, Henk, Steven and spouses and children
Alice & George Klasen
Gerty, John, Jane, Irene, Stanley and spouses and children
Johanna & William Wiersma
Florence, Joel, Harold, Jacqueline and spouses and children
Margaret & Gerald Vander Kooi
Aileen, Theresa, Gregg, Yvonne and spouses and children
Diane & Peter de Vos
Marion, Richard, Jennifer, Alice and their spouses and children
Jim & Jane Lise
Arie, John, Henk, Jennifer, Peter
Markus & Jeanne Lise
Nathan, Pauline, Anita, Christine, Shawn and their spouses and children
Henry & Louise Lise
Kevin, Jeremy, Maria
Her brothers and sister deceased: Hendrik, Zwaantje, Roelof, Markus, Engbert, Elso and their families.
Her in-laws, nephews and nieces.
The Lise family hereby wishes to express our sincere thanks. Thank you to all the staff, friends, volunteers and relatives at Faith Manor, Holland Chr. Homes, Brampton, Ont. Thank you for the persevering, unfailing, loving, professional, firm and tender care you gave to Mom/Oma. She may now rest from her labors and struggles in heaven. She was laid to rest in the Drayton Cemetery beside her late husband: "By Grace Alone."
Correspondence address:
Mr. Jim Lise, 149 McClung Road, R.R. #1, Caledonia, ON N3W 1V4

Psalm 46

The Lord took home our dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle,

HARRY PETER VERBURG

in his 67th year.
John & Marie Verburg
Joanne & Fred Smids
Adrian & Tina Verburg
Pauline & John Postma
Jack & Thea Verburg
all of Chatham, Ont., with 67 nieces and nephews.
It is our prayer that Kathleen, her children and her grandchildren, may experience a rich measure of our heavenly Father's nearness during these trying days.

Look for our Job Opportunities on page 18 and 19...

Obituaries

Nederhorst denBerg Chatham
the Neth. Ont.
Nov. 14, 1929 - Oct. 24, 1996

"I know that my Redeemer liveth!" (Job 19:25-27).
We announce with sadness, but also with relief, that his two-and-a-half-year struggle with brain cancer ended when our heavenly Father called home my devoted husband

HARRY PETER VERBURG

We were united in matrimony in Chatham, Ont., on June 25, 1954; Kathleen Verburg (Wielhouwer).
Dearly loved father and cherished opa of:
Dr. Adrian Verburg & Mary Joan (Veldboom) — Chatham
Kristen, Kyle, Kevin
Harry Peter Verburg & Betty (Bisschop) — Sarnia
Sheryl, Amanda, Diana, Harry J.
Lucille & Jake Vandervies — Sarnia
Nicole, Angela, Matthew, Heather
The funeral service was held on Oct. 28, 1996, at the First Chr. Ref. Church, Chatham, Ont., with Rev. Lammert Slofstra officiating.
Text: Psalm 116:15.
Handel's "Largo" was rendered by Miss Laura Bisschop.
At the interment at Maple Leaf Cemetery, Rev. James Van Weelden officiated.
Correspondence address:
1275 Sandy Lane, Apt. #415, Sarnia, ON N7V 4H5

The strife is o-er, the battle done,
The victory of life is won,
The song of triumph has begun, Alleluia!

On Oct. 24, 1996, our very dear son-in-law, brother-in-law and uncle

HARRY PETER VERBURG

was translated to glory.
We commend our dear daughter, sister and aunt, Kathleen, with her children and grandchildren to God's comfort and grace. He, only, can bind up the brokenhearted.
Mrs. Lutina Wielhouwer-VanDorsten — Chatham
Audrey & Cees DeVoogd (Wielhouwer) — Chatham
Alex & Johanna Wielhouwer (Vanderwel) — Chatham
Lucille & Kenneth Sjaarda (Wielhouwer) — Chatham
Adrian & Gertie Wielhouwer (Bax) — Owen Sound
Jean & Dick Verbeek (Wielhouwer) — Muirkirk
Eli & Dorothy Wielhouwer (VanRyn) — St. Thomas
78 nieces and nephews will miss their Uncle Harry very much.
Chatham, Ont., October 1996.

For Rent

For rent: An apartment to share with Shirley. Available January 1997. Close to Fanshawe College. Call **(519) 451-6787**. If no answer leave your number with **(519) 451-8268.**

Obituaries

Utrecht Palmerston
the Neth. Ont.
Oct. 28, 1900 - Oct. 27, 1996

The Lord took unto himself, our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

JOSEPHINE VERMEULEN (THIELE)

She was predeceased by her husband John Vermeulen in 1982, daughter Nellie Persohn in 1969, son-in-law Henry Persohn in 1996.
Much loved by daughter and son-in-law:
Ed & Tena VanGeest — Listowel
Corry Persohn, Mark, Christine, Johanna
four grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.
Survived by two sisters in the Netherlands. Predeceased by one brother and two sisters.
Lord's Day One: "Our only comfort in life and death is that we belong body and soul in life and in death, to our faithful Savior Jesus Christ."
Correspondence address:
Mrs. Tena VanGeest, 235 Nichol Ave. S., Listowel, ON N4W 2M2

Teachers

PRINCIPAL

DRAYTON, Ont.: Calvin Chr. School invites candidates to apply for the position of principal for the 1997-1998 school year. Our school is looking for a principal who knows how to balance teaching and administration. Experience as a vice-principal or principal is an asset. CCS is a well-established school in a rural setting, close to Kitchener/Waterloo and Stratford. As a very supportive, active community, we offer a program that includes a challenging curriculum, a library, special education, a gymnasium, and an extra-curricular program. If you would like to become part of a vibrant team with a mix of young and young-at-heart colleagues who are committed to providing high quality Christian education, please forward your resume to the principal: **Mrs. Jerry Ottens, Calvin Chr. School, Box 141, Drayton, ON N0G 1P0**
Phone: (519) 638-2935. Fax: (519) 638-2935. Deadline for applications is Dec. 16, 1996.

THUNDER BAY, Ont.: Thunder Bay Chr. School requires a **half-time teacher** to fill maternity leave position **from January to June 1997**, to teach Grade 8/9 literature, Bible, creative writing. Send resume to:

Thunder Bay Chr. School
R.R. #2, Arthur St. W.
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1
or
Fax (807) 939-2843

Miscellaneous

Low interest rates worry you?

A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY IS A GREAT ANSWER!

It provides:
Great Income
Super Tax Savings
A Wonderful Gift

Sample Rates

	Age	*Rate for Life*	*Tax Free*
Male	**65**	**7.4 %**	**78 %**
Female	**70**	**7.9 %**	**78 %**
Male	**75**	**8.7 %**	**100 %**
Couple	**75**	**8.0 %**	**82 %**

Why not introduce your parents, grandparents, aunt or uncle or a friend to the idea? Contact CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SERVICES for information and quotations; no obligation.
Phone: (416) 598-2181 or 1-800-267-8890
Fax: (416) 977-4611

455 Spadina Ave., #210, Toronto, ON M5S 2G8

Look for **Peter & Marja** on page 14...

Job Opportunities

OFFICE MANAGER

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SERVICES is seeking an **OFFICE MANAGER** to work approximately 20 hours per week at their downtown Toronto office. The Office Manager will oversee all office administrative activities and assist the Executive Director in co-ordinating CSS activities.

DUTIES:
- Co-ordination of reception, secretarial services, banking, and office upkeep;
- production/revision of promotional materials and statistical reports;
- may be asked to do occasional secretarial work.

REQUIREMENTS:
- related experience, preferably in a very busy office
- proficient in Word for Windows95, and Access for Windows95
- assertive, self-starting individual able to work with minimal supervision
- strong organizational, communication and time management skills

Please mail resume (deadline: **November 30, 1996**) to:
#210-455 Spadina Ave., Toronto, ON M5S 2G8
or fax (416) 977-4611.
A job description can be obtained by calling CSS at (416) 977-4611 or (416) 598-2181.

Classifieds

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Calls extended:
— to First, Drayton, Ont., **Rev. Jack Kerkhof** of Burlington, Ont.

Calls accepted:
— to First, Chatham, Ont., **Rev. Paul Stadt** of Georgetown, Ont.

Available for call:
— The Hope CRC of Port Perry, Ont., wishes to announce that **Rev. Ken Van Schelven** is available for call. The council recommends him to the churches. Pastor Ken can be contacted at 844 Logan Ct., Oshawa, ON L1J 7N6; Ph. (905) 433-4112.

Admitted to ministry:
— On Sept. 17, 1996, Classis Hamilton examined **Candidate Richard E. Grift** and with concurrence of the synodical deputies admitted him to the ministry of the Word in the CRC. Jack Kerkhof, Stated Clerk.

— On Sept. 26, 1996, **Richard Nanninga** sustained an examination for the office of minister of the Word in the CRC, in Classis Toronto. He had earlier been declared a candidate for ministry under Article 7 of the Church Order. Richard was ordained into this ministry on Sept. 27, 1996, in the Orillia congregation. We extend to him our congratulations and the knowledge that the Lord strengthens all He calls into His service.
John Tenyenhuis, Stated Clerk.

1996-1997 Bradenton Chapel Worship:
— **RCA-CRC Ministry**, Sundays 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Wednesdays, 7 p.m. All services at Bradenton Chr. School, Wichers Auditorium, 3304-43rd St. W., between Manatee and Cortez. **Nov. 24-Dec. 1:** Rev. Howard Davis; **Dec. 8-15:** Rev. Dr. Joel Nederhood; **Dec. 22-29:** Rev. Mark Volkers; **Jan. 5-12:** Rev. Roger Vander Kolk; **Jan. 19-26:** Rev. Charles Steenstra; **Feb. 2-9:** Rev. Dr. Wm. Brownson; **Feb. 16-23:** Rev. Douglas Zimmerman; **Mar. 2-9:** Rev. Dr. Roger Kleinheksel; **Mar. 16, 23, 30:** Rev. John De Kruyter.

Attention: All churches Please inform us of important changes. Items under "Church News" will be included free of charge.

Miscellaneous

The Living Word
Sermons for reading services.
CRC
Contact:
R. Vander Ploeg Secr./Treas.
210 Clarke St. N.
Woodstock, ON N4S 7M7
Phone: (519) 539-2117

Job Opportunities

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
VICTORIA, B.C.

SEEKS AN

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

Pacific Christian School is a well-established, interdenominational Christian school with 700 students in grades K-12. The schools draws its enrollment from 75 different churches representing 14 denominations in the Greater Victoria area.

An elementary principal is required to direct and oversee the operations of an elementary school with a staff of 25 and an enrollment of 400 students in K-7.

The principal must be a committed Christian, a team player, and be able to articulate a sound vision of Christian education. P.C.S. seeks a principal with a minimum of 4 years experience in Christian school leadership and one who qualifies for a B.C. College of Teachers Professional Certificate.

Inquiries may be directed to:
Mr. Bill Bomhof, Board Chairman,
Victoria Christian Education Society
Phone: (250) 727-7024 (residence) or (250) 385-1505 (work)

Please send your resume, a statement of your vision of Christian education and supporting documents in care of:
Mr. John Messelink, Secondary Principal
654 Agnes St., Victoria, BC V8Z 2E6
Phone: (250) 479-4532 or fax (250) 479-3511

Calgary Christian School
seeks a
SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Calgary Christian School (CCS) is a well-established, inter-interdenominational school with 635 students in grades K-12.
A **Secondary Principal** is required to direct and oversee the operations of the secondary campus with a staff of 20 and approximately 225 students in grades 8-12.
The Principal must be able to articulate a sound vision of Christian education and be committed to working as a member of an administrative team.
CCS seeks a principal with training and experience in Christian educational leadership and excellent communication and interpersonal skills. The successful candidate must be qualified for Alberta Teaching Certification.
Application **deadline is November 22, 1996.** Please send resume, a statement of your vision of Christian education and leadership, and references to:

Mr. J. Lindemulder, Chairperson of the Board
Calgary Christian School, 2839-49 Street S.W.
Calgary, AB T3E 3X9
Phone: (403) 242-2896
Fax: (403) 242-6682

VICE-PRINCIPAL NEEDED

Lacombe Christian School, serving a student body of 375 students in grades K-9, requires a Vice-Principal for the 1997-98 school year. Duties include approximately 40 per cent administration time and 60 per cent teaching. Candidates with strengths in elementary education will be given preference. Send your resumes to: **John Piers, Principal, Lacombe Christian School, 5206-58 Street, Lacombe, AB T4L 1G9. Phone: (403) 782-6531, Fax: (403) 782-5760.**
Deadline for applications is **December 21, 1996.**

Job Opportunities

Business Manager

Langley Christian Schools invites applications for a newly-developed position of business manager, with responsibility for providing leadership and management for all non-academic administrative affairs of the schools, particularly in the areas of financial management and business operations. Duties would include: developing budgets, managing existing and future expansion of facilities, co-ordinating volunteers in several areas, supporting the present capital campaign drive.
Langley Christian is a growing school community of 600+ students, on two campuses, consisting of Grades K-10 with plans to expand into 11 and 12.
Applicants having the necessary financial and personnel skills to serve our schools, can forward applications and/or written inquiries to:
LCS Board, 21789 50th Ave., Langley, BC V3A 3T2

THE GREATER WINNIPEG SOCIETY FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
operating
Calvin Christian School
Winnipeg, Manitoba
is seeking applications for the position of

PRINCIPAL

Calvin Chr. School offers a Christ-centred education to 357 students (K to 9) from various denominations in the Greater Winnipeg area. Applicants must qualify for Manitoba certification (60 hours minimum in education courses).

Please send your resume and statement of educational philosophy to:

Principal Search Committee
c/o Len Hordijk
425 Bonner Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2G 1B4

For further information call **(204) 338-7981**

Interested in placing an ad? Get in touch with us for details.

SEEKING A PASTOR

Horizon Community Church, a new CRC ministry of 100 families, is seeking a pastor. The church is located in the thriving suburban community of Highlands Ranch, a part of the **Denver Metropolitan area**. Key to the church's program is Bible-based dynamic preaching, enthusiastic worship, and sharing of the gospel in active outreach to a suburban community. Essential to the church's development is continued facilitation of the merging of two congregations and leadership for staff ministry. Please send inquiries and/or resumes to the **Search Committee, Horizon Community Church, 7140 S. Colorado Blvd., Littleton, CO 80122.**

Classifieds

Job Opportunities

ACCOUNTANT
CRCNA — Canada

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), has a **full-time opening for an accountant** in the Burlington Office CRCNA-Canada. The position responsibilities include receipting and disbursement functions, maintaining general accounting ledgers, and preparation of monthly financial reports.
A qualified candidate must have the ability to handle a broad range of accounting, and administrative functions while possessing strong computer skills with demonstrated competency in the use of a variety of accounting and spreadsheet programs.

A college diploma in accounting or business with emphasis in accounting; interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills are essential.

For consideration, please submit a copy of your resume and letter stating your interest, by **November 25, 1996,** to:

Director of Personnel
Christian Reformed Church in North America
3475 Mainway, P.O. Box 5070,
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8
(905) 336-2920/Fax (905) 336-8344

ADA REALTY LTD.
2011-137 Ave., Suite 404
Edmonton, AB
T5A 4W2
(403) 473-8149
Sid Vandermeulen
Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.

Het vertrouwde adres.

Accommodation

WELLINGSTONE CHRISTIAN HOME
is a 52-unit, Christian seniors apartment complex located in Hamilton, Ont. At present, we have **one 2-bedroom unit** on the ground floor and **one 1-bedroom unit** on the second floor. Both are available on a life-lease basis. For further information or application form, please contact **Mrs. Emily Prins, (905) 692-4554.**

For Rent

APARTMENTS: Redeemer College has **2- and 4-bedroom, furnished apartments available.** Can be rented daily, weekly or monthly at reasonable rates. No lease required. Please call **(905) 648-2131, ext. 260 or 290.**

For rent: An **attractive 3-bedroom house**, also a **1-bedroom apartment** with separate entrance, all under one roof, in north **St. Catharines**, two miles from theChr. school. Please call **Ed Witvoet at (905) 646-6594 (home) or (905) 468-2153 (ext. 111) (work).**

Miscellaneous

DCA Travel — Holland Travel Professional
Toronto 416-224-5211
Toll-Free (Canada wide)
1-800-667-2525
Fax 416-224-0842
Grimsby 905-945-3301
Burlington 905-522-8602
Emergency Service Available
Business & Vacation Travel

Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst

Emmanuel Reformed Church
170 Clarke Street North
Woodstock, ON
Tel. (519) 537-6422

Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst met medewerking van het Kerkkoor

Wij hopen, D.V. twee diensten te houden:

Een traditionele zangdienst,
Zondag, 1 december, 1996
7.30 n.m.

Zangdienst met
Nederlandse jeugd
Zondag, 8 december, 1996
7.30 n.m.

Verversingen na de dienst

Attention: All residents of Holland Chr. Homes Brampton, Ont.

The **Christmas issue** of ***Christian Courier***, which will be dated **Dec. 6, 1996**, will include many Christmas greetings and/or messages.

If you would like your name included on the special page reserved for the residents of Holland Chr. Homes, please contact one of the ladies who normally looks after this matter in either Hope, Providence, Trinity or Covenant Tower.

Stan de Jong
C.C. Staff

Job Opportunities

Bethel Reformed Church
Abbotsford, B.C.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Recently we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the founding of this congregation. We did this without having a full-time pastor. We are a congregation within the Reformed Church in America. If you are interested in becoming our pastor please send your profile to the **Chairperson of the Search Committee, Bethel Reformed Church, 3260 Gladwin Rd., Abbotsford, BC V2S 7B4.**
A church profile is available.

Bethesda Christian Homes

In Woodbridge " Just a little above Toronto "

Three storey:
Seniors' 1 & 2 bedroom apartments, balcony, ravine, etc.
Two storey:
Residential Care, Private Rooms - 2pc en suite, homelike.

Retire in comfort, security and peaceful surroundings.
For rental inquiries and reservations
Phone/Fax (905) 459-2111
Andy Mast, 38 Haslemere Ave., Brampton, ON L6W 2X4

Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

Nov. 16 Bazaar at John Knox Chr. School, **Oakville**, Ont. Bazaar from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Auction at 4:30 p.m. See ad in CC Nov. 8, 1996 (#)

Nov. 16 Concert/rally sponsored by Redeemer College, 7 p.m., Jubilee Fellowship CRC, 13 Wilholme Dr., **St. Catharines**, Ont. Performing will be the choirs from Redeemer College and from Beacon, Calvin Memorial and Heritage Christian schools. Free admission. Everyone welcome!

Nov. 19 Noon hour concert by Jonathan Oldengarm at the organ of St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral (Richmond & Dundas), **London**, Ont. Free-will offering.

Nov. 19 Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care's annual general meeting, 3 p.m., Columbus Centre, **Toronto**, Ont. Theme: "The Changing Face of Ontario." Speakers: Sandra Lang, Dep. Minister of Community & Social Services, Bishop Fred Colli and others. Info.: (416) 326-6858.

Nov. 19-23 The Redeemer College Theatre Dept. presents the fall mainstage play, "An Inspector Calls," by J.B. Priestly. Suitable for the entire family. Preview: **Nov. 19;** matinee, **Nov.20.** At Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. Tickets/Info.: (905)648-2131.

Nov. 23 "Biggest Bazaar in Town," annual bazaar from 10 a.m.-9 p.m., at Calvin Memorial Chr. School, 300 Scott St., **St. Catharines**, Ont. Children's games, baked goods, crafts, plants, lunch and supper. Fashion show at 2 p.m. Auction starts at 7 p.m. Info.: June Mergl (905) 356-1521. Proceeds for Christian education!

Nov. 30 Shalom Manor's "Annual Tea & Craft Sale," from 1-4 p.m., at Shalom Manor, **Grimsby,** Ont. Flowers, crafts, gifts and the ever popular bake table. Donations are welcome. Keep this date open!

Dec. 1 The Mississauga Choral Society, orchestra and soloists perform G.F. Handel's "Messiah," 3 p.m., St. Dominic's Church, Cawthra & Atwater, **Mississauga**, Ont. Info./tickets: (905)278-7059.

Dec. 4 Chr. Farmers Federation of Ontario 1996 annual convention & banquet, Holiday Inn (next to Stone Rd. Mall), **Guelph**, Ont. Convention at 10 a.m. Banquets at 5:30 p.m. Registration deadline: Nov. 29, 1996. For info./tickets contact: (519) 837-1620 or fax (519) 824-1835.

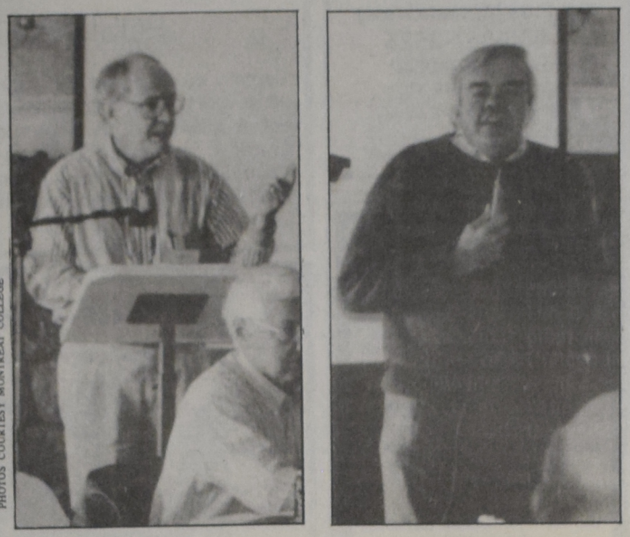
Dec. 4 Christmas concert by the Redeemer College Concert Choir and the Campus Chorus, all directed by Dr. Christiaan Teeuwsen. Anthems, carols and madrigals. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Tickets/Info.: (905)648-2131.

Christian scholars discuss how to get all of us to love the earth

John Wood

GLOUCESTER, Mass. — When 90 academics gathered for a four-day round-table discussion on the environment in mid-October, the organizer, Dr. Harold Heie, didn't know whether he would have a fruitful exchange of new ideas or a verbal slug-fest. The theme, "Global Stewardship: From the Academy to the Public Square," was chosen to stimulate new ways of working together among scholars and those who implement environmental policy from both secular and Christian institutions and organizations.

Participants would focus on what Jim Skillen, of the Center for Public Justice near Washington, D.C., said, "has been called the national security issue of the early 21st century — the environment." In a masterful round-table dialogue Skillen cautioned his audience not to become trapped by seeing the environment as simply a "special interest," one among many. The social economy, others noted, is built on and rooted in the natural economy. We need a new framework of assumptions. "Good stewardship of nature is a fundamental presupposition of public law..., not merely a consequence of 'interest group' competition."



PHOTOS COURTESY MONTREAT COLLEGE

Dr. Harold Heie (letf) and Dr. Cal Dewitt were prominent speakers at the Global Stewardship conference.

Where's the Christian voice?

In the opening address, Andrew Steer, director of the environment department for the World Bank, laid out the challenge to be met by Christian educational institutions today. "We are desperately in need of a generation of Christian young people," he said, "to come out of Christian colleges and lead our society on the environment." He noted that a Christian voice is almost completely lacking at the national and international policy table.

"Everyone," he said, "recognizes that the environmental issue is at heart a spiritual issue." People are at the centre of the cause, they receive the consequences, and only people can bring about change. To do so requires a spiritual renewal. According to Steer, "government don't lead in these areas, but follow."

Christianity has important things to say about the value of people and their place in relation to the rest of creation. But this voice has been largely absent from the public square.

High level of civility

The participants were in Gloucester, one of the oldest fishing settlements on the Atlantic coast, to conclude the two-year "Global Stewardship Initiative." This $200,000 special project was funded by the Pew Charitable Trust and sponsored by the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities whose headquarters are in Washington, D.C. The coalition is made up of some 90 Christ-centred academic institutions from across Canada and the U.S. Together they have over 3,000 faculty, with expertise in 250 major areas of scholarship. This project was designed to enhance high quality scholarship and public policy participation among these academics. Respondents to the round table discussion included economists, theologians, historians, social and natural scientists, as well as lawyers and other public policy practitioners.

Richard Baer, Cornell University professor of environmental ethics, commended the conferees on "the high level of civility and academic discourse." "I have seldom seen this," he said, "in any major secular university setting." It is possible to practice the "culture of stewardship" — to recognize, as Calvin College geographer Janel Curry-Roper put it, "the covenantal nature of society and our relationship with the non-human world." We can strive to live with integrity individually, in our communities, and in our nations.

Check the Web

Conferees frequently expressed their sense of personal encouragement as they listened to others report of successes small and large. A number of new resources for environmental stewardship were also featured. It was agreed that one of the best was a new inspirational video, "Keeping the Earth: Religious and Scientific Perspectives On the Environment." Narrated by James Earl Jones and produced by the Union of Concerned Scientists, it features both religious leaders and prominent scientists. Cal DeWitt, director of the AuSable Institute and well known to CC readers, is featured alongside Harvard Professor Edward O. Wilson. This video would make an excellent discussion starter for small groups. For those inclined to wade into the academic literature, most of the discussion papers can be found on the Internet at the Evangelical Environmental Network homepage (The address is: http://cesc.montreat.edu/).

Living in an 'earthly' world

In devotions one morning, Rick Stevick of Messiah College asked a question that many wondered about: "Is the term 'Christian environmentalist' an oxymoron?"

He answered his own question. "God's approach," Stevick said, "was the material earth route — flesh, water, oxygen. Not the less messy ethereal model. Only the naive would doubt that the quality of the earth affects the quality of our earthly existence." Simple justice, a clear biblical principle, tells us to care for the earth and to thereby show our love for each other and for our creator. Christian academics are struggling to make this care a reality in their lives, on the campus, in their communities, and around the world.

The conference closed with a worship service and an opportunity to sign a joint statement "Global Stewardship: The Christian Mandate" (see p.6). Cal DeWitt lead the worship with materials from his recent book, *Earthwise: A Biblical Response to Environmental Issues* (CRC Publications, 1994). Participants read psalms and sang creation hymns to the rising sound of gale-force winds and crashing ocean waves. A New England nor'easter pounded ashore that night, reminding us that only God is maker and sustainer of heaven and earth.

Thinkbit

"It's relatively easy to befriend a dog or a horse. Loving another human being is a lot more challenging."

Naomi H. Rosenblatt

News Digest

Manning wants protection for unborn

CHILLIWACK, B.C. — Reform Party Leader Preston Manning has spoken out in favor of a constitutional amendment to protect the rights of the unborn, saying the fetus should be regarded as a person and protected from most abortions, reports the *Globe and Mail*.

In the Fraser Valley on Oct. 30, Manning said, "I think you need a constitutional provision that provides protection to the unborn, not just a Criminal Code change."

This is Manning's personal view. The Reform Party has no position on abortion. A constitutional amendment restricting abortion is not Reform policy, but Manning promises that if Reform becomes the government, it will introduce a law allowing Canadians to force a referendum on accessibility to abortion and other controversial issues.

The support of 51 percent of voters would be required to pass laws under Reform's proposed referendum process, called "citizens' initiative legislation."

Manning asserts that not giving rights to the unborn will be viewed in hindsight as being as shocking as the past practice of not recognizing slaves, women and children as persons.

School tries to ban offensive T-shirts

DELAWARE, Ohio (AP) — A school in Delaware, Ohio, that discouraged the wearing of satanic T-shirts is trying to decide whether to extend that policy to all religious messages. That doesn't sit well with eighth-grader Sarah Hyatt, who wears T-shirts that say "It's a God thing" and "Jesus."

"There's nothing wrong with them. They're not offensive," said the 13-year-old. The issue arose in October, when students who wore shirts with satanic themes were asked to leave them at home. Those students demanded that classmates not wear shirts with Christian themes. A group of students and administrators has been asked to study the issue.